

## Two million attend prayers in Mecca

MECCA (AFP) — Some two million Muslim pilgrims attended Friday prayers in the Holy City of Mecca at the start of the annual pilgrimage. Another million worshipped in Medina, Islam's second holiest city to the north, the official Saudi Press Agency said. The pilgrimage culminates in a week's time with the feast of the sacrifice during which thousands of sheep and cattle are slaughtered. Every Muslim is expected to make the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina at least once in his life if he can afford it. Mecca is the birthplace of the Prophet Mohammed. Medina is the city that gave him shelter when he was expelled from Mecca.

# Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation  
جوردان تايمز يومية مستقلة تصدر عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية للرأي

## Dakamseh tribe pledges allegiance

AMMAN (J.T.) — In a cable to His Majesty King Hussein on Friday, the tribe of Ahmad Musa Dakamseh pledged allegiance to the Hashemite leadership and expressed their absolute confidence in the military judicial system. They said that the Jordanian Armed Forces will always be the source of pride and confidence as well as an armour and strong shield defending the nation. Expressing their confidence in the military judiciary, the Dakamseh tribe praised the integrity of the military judicial system and voiced appreciation and gratitude over the statement made by a military spokesman in which he said that Ahmad will receive a fair and public trial. The tribe said they have visited Ahmad and found that he was treated well with respect and has not been subjected to any pressure nor received any threat. In their cable, the Dakamseh tribe also congratulated the King on the successful surgery he underwent.

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## Common ground eludes U.S. effort to jumpstart Palestinian-Israeli talks

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — After a week of consultations here, the U.S. government has failed to find common ground between Israel and the Palestinians that would allow peace talks to resume.

During that time, clashes have multiplied in the West Bank between Palestinian youths and Israeli soldiers, and Washington has tried to stem the loss of its peace-making credit in the Arab World.

Saeb Erakat and Mahmoud Abbas, the two negotiators dispatched to Washington by Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, were expected to meet Friday for the second time with the U.S. point man on the Middle East, Dennis Ross.

The two Palestinians then were to head back to Gaza to brief Mr. Arafat, whom Mr. Erakat said had given them "very specific instructions."

Consultations between Washington and the two sides will follow, the State Department said late Thursday.

At the White House Monday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu showed ramrod intransigence, telling President Bill Clinton that Israel would continue to develop Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as well as Arab Jerusalem.

It was Israel's move three weeks ago to begin that type of construction in Arab East Jerusalem settlements that triggered the latest hostilities and derailed Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

The Palestinians, upon leaving the State Department Thursday after meeting with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Mr. Ross, confirmed that only a freeze in Israeli settlements would lead them to resume a dialogue with Israel.

Each side, however, made some public concessions, yet they were not enough to break the impasse.

Mr. Netanyahu's sole good-will gesture was to confirm that Israel would build several thousand housing units for the Palestinians of Arab East Jerusalem.

The Palestinian negotiators clearly signalled their position to Washington by reiterating their rejection of



U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright shakes hands with Palestinian envoy Mahmoud Abbas as other members of the Palestinian delegation, Hanan Ashrawi, Saeb Erakat and Hassan Abdul Rahman, watch after meetings at the U.S. State Department in Washington on Thursday (AFP photo)

## Netanyahu 'studying' Labour coalition

Combined agency dispatches

ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER Benjamin Netanyahu told Israeli television Friday in an interview from Europe that he was considering forming a "national unity" government with the opposition Labour Party.

"I'm thinking about it already," to gain a wide public consensus prior to starting final status talks with the Palestinians, Mr. Netanyahu told the state-run television.

"I think about one basic question: will the broadening of the government bring a better result in our ability to stick to this process and finish it," the right-wing leader said of the talks on the toughest issues between Israel and the Palestinians.

"Or, will (Palestinian President Yasser) Arafat see two parts of this government that he could play against each other," Mr. Netanyahu said, adding he would decide on a "national unity" government "in the near future."

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## Protests flare in Hebron despite PNA measures

Combined agency dispatches

IN A SIGN of cooperation with Israel, Palestinian security forces Friday chased Palestinians throwing stones at Israeli troops, and a militant wanted by Israel gave himself up to Palestinian police.

Palestinians broke off security cooperation with Israel last month, following Israel's decision to build a Jewish settlement in Arab East Jerusalem.

But there have been some signs in recent days that Palestine President Yasser Arafat, at the prodding of the United States, is ready to help Israel in preventing suicide bombings by militants and quell the daily stone-throwing protests.

Earlier this week, Mr. Arafat met with the head of Israel's Shin Bet security service and Palestinian police helped Israel track down a cell of the militant group Hamas.

The cell, based in the West Bank village of Surif, was responsible for the deaths of 11 Israelis in the past 18 months, including the kidnapping and shoot-

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ing of an Israeli soldier, Sharon Edri, 20, whose body was discovered Thursday near Surif.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised Mr. Arafat's help in cracking the case, a sharp turnaround from his earlier contention that the Palestinian leader had given his tacit approval to attacks by militants.

But Mr. Netanyahu said the Palestinians have yet to show "full cooperation."

Mr. Netanyahu, who is visiting Italy, told reporters Thursday he was considering bringing the opposition Labour Party into the government as Israel heads into negotiations on a permanent peace agreement (see separate story).

Israel army radio reported that U.S. envoy Dennis Ross was planning to come to the Mideast next week to help resolve the continuing crisis between Israel and the Palestinians.

In a further sign of tensions, Israeli troops shot and wounded 15 Palestinians while battling hundreds of stone-throwers on a

(Continued on page 7)

## King returns after successful surgery, talks in Washington

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Friday returned home after undergoing a successful prostate surgery at Mayo Clinic in Rochester.

In an arrival statement, King Hussein thanked Jordanians for their good wishes for his speedy recovery and return home.

The King said: "The surgery was not an easy one, but thank God, it was successful, with no complications whatsoever and I am in good health."

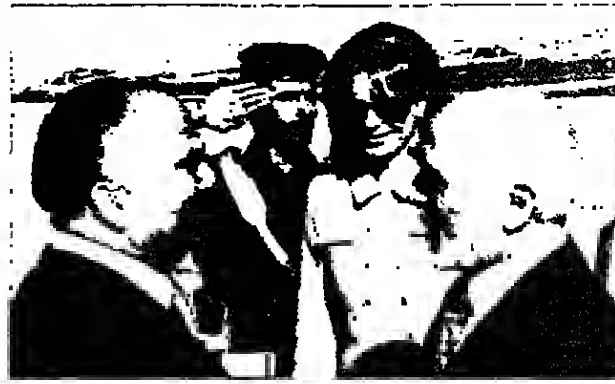
The King said: "After several days of recuperation, I will, God willing, resume work anew in order to make up for the time when I spent in hospital."

King Hussein held talks during his visit to the United States with U.S. President

Bill Clinton and senior American officials. His talks focused on the peace process in the Middle East and bilateral ties as well as issues of common concern.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday had a 45-minute bedside meeting with the King at Mayo Clinic and reviewed with him Middle East developments and ways for breaking the deadlock in the peace negotiations.

Upon their return home, King Hussein and Queen Noor were received at the airport by Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath, Royal family members. Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, the acting speaker of the Upper House of Parlia-



Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor are received by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan upon their return from the U.S. on Friday (Petra photo)

ment, the acting speaker of the Lower House, Cabinet ministers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff Field Marshal Abdul Hafez Mirai, senior civil and military officials.

## Hashemite Charity donates JD50,000 to Jerusalem

AMMAN (J.T.) — Upon directives from His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation on Friday donated JD50,000 for Jerusalem fund-raising campaign launched by the London-based Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC) under the theme "Jerusalem Appeal."

His Majesty King Hussein's adviser for Islamic affairs, Izzeddin Khatib Tamimi, a member of the organisation, told MBC in a telephone call that preservation of the Arab and Islamic identity of Jerusalem falls within the core of Jordanian efforts led by King Hussein to help the Palestinians in Jerusalem stay on their lands and bolster their steadfastness in the face of daily and political difficulties.

Sheikh Tamimi said practical and effective steps to maintain the Arab presence in Jerusalem were more needed now than any time in light of the "quite expulsion campaign" which the Israeli authorities are waging against the Arab residents of Jerusalem.

He said such Israeli measures aim at expelling 50,000-80,000 Palestinians from the Holy City through imposing daily pressure on them and preventing them from building houses.

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## Prince Hassan: Financial, economic and social security more important than military might

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Financial, economic and social security may prove far more important than hard security — armament, material and equipment — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent has told an international symposium entitled "Diplomacy beyond 2000 — The information explosion: a challenge for diplomacy."

"Appreciation of the role of public diplomacy in projecting soft power and propagating soft security has been well realised by many countries including Jordan. Indeed, our role in bringing about the recent agreements in the Middle East may serve as a case in point," said Prince Hassan in a speech delivered Thursday on his behalf by Mazen Armouti, the Crown Prince's advisor and president of the Jordan Institute of Diplomacy.

He said that through generating the concept of soft security (financial, economic and social stability), parties in the Middle East conflict are starting to

realise the importance of consolidating peace and security.

"Jordan undoubtedly intends to continue its assistance in this respect to ensure that all outstanding commitments are carried out by the contracting parties in a cooperative framework, and on the basis of reciprocity," the Prince said.

He stressed the importance of raising public awareness through media-assisted debate.

Prince Hassan emphasised the correlation between diplomacy and the advances in the technology and dissemination of information.

He said this has created instant global sharing of information in terms of relations between countries and peoples of the world. Therefore, the Prince added, the latest developments have changed the concept of international relations emphasising on "public diplomacy" of "soft power" and projection of interests and views through information technology and the media of communications instead of the tradi-

tional projection of the power of force.

"The information age environment has led to a new form of foreign policy modalities more influenced by wired international public opinion that is increasingly less heterogeneous, not only among opinion leaders but also the educated masses who have access to information sources," said Prince Hassan.

Prince Hassan described information as "the most important human commodity that has already become the central focus of economic and political activity in the more developed countries."

He said the need to encourage interdependence and equal distribution of information among nations should be given advantage over any other consideration as a functional approach to international cooperation.

"It is my conviction that wider access, coupled with balanced flow of information through IT (information technology) and mass media alike will lead to sig-

(Continued on page 7)

## Security Council is split over response to Iraq's Hajj flight

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — The U.N. Security Council remained divided Friday over an appropriate response to an Iraqi flight carrying pilgrims to Saudi Arabia branded an "outright violation" of sanctions by Washington, diplomats said.

Security Council experts met Friday ahead of a full council meeting in a bid to reach consensus on a formal statement with permanent members China and Russia notably agreeing with the Iraqi view that no violation of an air embargo had taken place. The argument focuses on the terms of Resolution 670 which set up the air embargo in September 1990 following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait the previous month.

Iraq argues that Wednesday's return flight to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia by an Iraqi Airways plane carrying 104 pilgrims was humanitarian and allowed under the ambiguously-worded text.

Diplomats said that Washington was arguing that a firm response must be issued to prevent Iraq from carrying out further flights during the annual pilgrimage to Mecca.

Iraqi officials here say that they asked permission for the Hajj flight in a letter on Feb. 5 to the U.N. Sanctions Committee in which they also sought the release of \$50 million in frozen assets.

But the Sanctions Committee rejected the request on the assets while failing to respond specifically about the pilgrimage.

Iraq has been under a crippling sanctions regime since the invasion of Kuwait which

was rolled back during the 1991 Gulf war. U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said meanwhile he expected the Security Council to renew the oil-for-food deal with Iraq when it expires in June.

Mr. Annan, speaking in a news conference in Geneva, told reporters: "My own suspicion is that once the six months is over, since the condition that led to the passage of that resolution was totally relevant and compensations will still have to be paid, the council will be inclined to extend it for another six months."

"Under U.N. Resolution 486 being implemented since December, Iraq is allowed to sell \$2 billion worth of oil over six months so as to buy food and medicines."

"There have been some delays in really getting the scheme off the ground. Food has begun flowing into Iraq," Mr. Annan said. "My own sense is that the food-for-oil scheme was introduced because the member states realised that the sanctions could be a blunt instrument and they did not want to hurt the population in Iraq, particularly the women and children."

"It is regrettable that it took about six years for it to get off the ground," Mr. Annan said.

Foodstuffs bought under the oil-for-food deal with the United Nations are piling up in Iraq but no medicine has arrived yet, a U.N. source said in Baghdad on Thursday.

He said more than 200,000 tonnes of food

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## Iran raises uproar over German court verdict

TEHRAN (Agencies) — Iran brushed aside on Friday a decision by the European Union (EU) to sever the so-called "critical dialogue" with the Islamic republic, saying it needed no communication with a "self-centred" partner.

Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani also warned that German interests here would suffer after a Berlin court ruled that Tehran ordered the murder of Iranian Kurd opponents.

The Germans broke the heart of millions of Iranians with this verdict and they are going to suffer for it," Mr. Rafsanjani said at Friday prayers at Tehran Uni-

versity. "I am not saying they will lose everything they have here, but their position here will definitely be weakened."

After his speech, thousands of protesters chanting "Allahu Akbar" marched on the heavily-guarded German embassy in the capital to stage angry protests.

The demonstrators hurled stones at the building which they described as a "second spy nest," after that of the former U.S. embassy which was stormed by Iranian students in 1979 after they called it a "nest of espionage."

Some protesters beat their

chests, a sign of grief among Iran's overwhelmingly Shiite Muslims, while others recited verses from the Holy Koran. They burned Israeli and U.S. flags and demanded an apology from Germany by Monday.

A leader of the fundamentalist Ansar-e-Hizbollah group told the crowd that one of his followers would "strap a bomb to himself and blow up the embassy" if Germany did not back down in its criticism of Iranian leaders.

A German court on Thursday convicted one Iranian and three Lebanese of the 1992 assassination of four Kurdish opponents in a

Berlin restaurant, after a trial lasting three and a half years.

Judge Frithjof Kbusch sparked a storm by saying "the background to the crime reaches to the highest levels of the Iranian state."

He said orders for the murder came from a body of which both Mr. Rafsanjani and Iran's spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei are members.

Among those attending Tehran University sermon was Intelligence Minister Ali Fallahiyani, who German prosecutors last year issued a warrant for his arrest in connection with the Berlin killings.

Mr. Rafsanjani, his voice

shaking with anger, said: "The ominous verdict is a shame and scandal for German justice and all others in the West. This is a political judgement, a publicity stunt."

"The trial was the most scandalising event in Western history," he said.

Germany — Iran's largest trading partner — responded to the court verdict by recalling its ambassador from Iran and expelling four Iranian officials, provoking tit-for-tat expulsions by Tehran.

The EU also decided to recall its ambassadors and suspend "critical dialogue"

(Continued on page 7)



## Rebels claim capture of two garrisons in northeast Sudan

ASMARA (Agencies) — Sudanese rebels of the National Democratic Alliance said Friday they had captured two garrisons in northeastern Sudan and once again denied that Eritrean soldiers are helping them.

Abdul Malik, a spokesman for the alliance, identified the garrisons as Gadamei and Kotanayep. The former is some 200 kilometers north of Kassala, the capital of the province by the same name. Kassala is about 400 kilometers east of Khartoum.

Mr. Malik made no mention of casualties on either side.

Sudanese government officials in Khartoum could not immediately be reached for comment, and there was no independent confirmation of the rebel claims.

But on Wednesday, a Sudanese army spokesman said troops had repulsed rebel attacks on three garrisons, including Gadamei.

Gen. Mohammad Sanousi Ahmad said Eritrean troops attacked at dawn with heavy artillery and then marched near the Sudanese Eritrean border, Sudanese state-run Omdurman Radio reported.

Four tanks and four armoured personnel carriers were used in the attack, the radio said.

"But, thank God, our gallant troops, based in the area, repulsed the aggressors," the radio quoted Gen. Sanousi as saying. Eritrean troops "have fled the battlefield, leaving behind their dead and heaps of weapons and ammunitions," the radio said.

The report made no mention of casualties. Spokesman Malik repeated the alliance's denial that Eritrean and Ethiopian troops are fighting alongside the rebels.

The alliance is a grouping of political parties from northern Sudan, which is allied with the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), a southern rebel group led by Colonel John Garang.

Col. Garang is overall commander of rebel forces. He is currently leading a sepa-

rate offensive toward Juba, the largest town still in government hands in southern Sudan.

Both Col. Garang and the alliance say they want to oust the government of Lieutenant-General Omar Al Bashir and establish democratic rule in Sudan.

Since launching an offensive last November from bases in Eritrea, the alliance claims to have captured several towns inside Sudan, there has been no independent verification of the reports.

Col. Garang launched his own offensive in southern Sudan early last year. The mostly black, Christian and animist southerners took up arms against the Khartoum government in 1983 to press for increased autonomy and development for the region that has traditionally been dominated by the Muslim and Arab north.

A top Sudanese dissident predicted Wednesday that Sudan's government would fall in three weeks.

Sadeq Al Mahdi, a former Sudanese prime minister, said the collapse of the regime would come about through a popular uprising, which opposition groups are planning in Sudan.

"I believe a radical change, which will eventually lead to getting rid of the regime in Sudan, will take place in the next three weeks," Mr. Mahdi was quoted as saying at a Cairo news conference by Egypt's official Middle East News Agency.

Sudanese opposition leaders have said they consider a string of recent rebel military successes to be an indication that the Bashir government is close to collapsing.

But Mr. Mahdi said the rebellion alone would not suffice.

"It should be combined with a popular uprising and an insurgency by the army," he said.

Mr. Mahdi has long predicted the fall of the regime, but had not made a precise prediction on when it might collapse.

## Turkey to spend \$31b on defence

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey will spend at least \$31 billion to buy and upgrade weapons systems and military equipment over the next 10 years, Defence Minister Turgut Tanay said Friday.

The plan includes the purchase of 108 helicopters, early warning aircraft, advanced missiles and radar systems, the construction of five frigates and modern tanks and the modernisation of combat aircraft, Mr. Tanay told a news conference.

"Our main objective will be to meet our requirements from local sources to the extent it is possible," Mr. Tanay said.

"We are aiming at not only having a strong armed forces, but also boosting the indigenous defence industry," he added.

With around 800,000 troops, Turkey has North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's (NATO) second largest army after the United States.

The NATO member had totally relied on Western countries in meeting its equipment requirements until the mid-1980s, but since then has begun to develop its own defence industry.

In its largest-scale defence industry programme, Turkey has been co-producing 240 F-16 fighter aircraft, worth \$7 billion, under a contract with the U.S. Lockheed Martin.

## Velayati to visit Egypt to 'build Islamic solidarity'

CAIRO (AFP) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati said in an interview published here Friday that he would visit Cairo in the next few days to help build Islamic solidarity.

"Very soon I will go to Cairo to pass on a message from (Iranian) President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to President Hosni Mubarak on the eighth Islamic summit" to be held in Tehran in December, Mr. Velayati told the government daily Al Ahrar Al Arabi.

"Egypt is a regional, Arab and Islamic force, and current developments require coordination at regional and international levels to safeguard the interests of the Islamic people," he said.

Egypt and Iran broke diplomatic ties after Iran's Islamic revolution in 1979, although they opened interests

sections in each other's country in 1991.

Cairo has accused Tehran of stirring up trouble in Egypt, where militants are waging a violent campaign to overthrow the secular government.

However, Mr. Velayati dismissed as "unfounded American accusations" the allegations and others linking Tehran to the bombing of a U.S. military complex in Saudi Arabia last June in which 19 U.S. airmen died.

"It's a media tactic to intimidate countries in the same region as Iran and to deepen the rift between Tehran and certain brother Arab countries," he said.

Iran's Islamic government was accused Thursday by a German court of ordering the murders of four Iranian Kurd opponents in a Berlin restaurant in 1992, sparking a crisis between Tehran and the European Union.



WEST BANK CLASHES: Palestinians look out from a shop on Friday as a group of Israeli soldiers go into action chasing Palestinian stone-throwers in the centre of the city (Reuters photo)

## Turkish Islamist: Coalition opposers must step down from government

ANKARA (Agencies) — A leading member of Turkey's ruling Islamist on Friday called on secularist cabinet members who have criticised the coalition government in the media to step down.

"If their comments are true, what these ministers have to do is resign from the government," Welfare Party Deputy Chairman Ahmet Tekdal told a news conference.

Trade and Industry Minister Yilmaz Erez and Health Minister Yildirim Aktuna have complained about what they see as Welfare's unwillingness to implement an anti-Islamist crackdown demanded by the military.

The powerful army has told Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan's government to reverse a rise in Islamist activism but his Welfare Party is reluctant to act against its own grassroots.

Mr. Erez and Mr. Aktuna are members of the pro-Western True Path Party which formed a ruling alliance with Welfare last year, making Mr. Erbakan modern Turkey's first Islamist leader.

Turkey's conservative main opposition leader

Mesut Yilmaz on Thursday called for the creation of a national unity government that would replace the Islamist-led cabinet.

"I call on all political parties to join hands and set up a broad-based government," Mr. Yilmaz, a former prime minister and head of the Motherland Party, told a press conference here.

"A national unity government will be the only way out of the current stalemate," he said.

The military-dominated National Security Council, Turkey's highest advisory body, on Feb. 28 asked the government to implement a plan to curb creeping Islamisation, but Mr. Erbakan has done little to put the council's resolutions into effect.

The rift raised the possibility of an intervention by the military which has staged three coups in the last 37 years.

A Turkish state security prosecutor Thursday called for a 12-year prison sentence for an Islamist former mayor on charges of serious public order offences for organising an anti-Islamist protest, the Anatolia News Agency said.

Bekir Yildiz, the former

mayor of the Ankara suburb of Sincan from the Welfare Party, was arrested after the Feb. 2 protest.

The "free Jerusalem" rally organised by his municipality had turned into an Islamic fundamentalist show.

Attending the rally, Iran's ambassador in Ankara Mohammad Bagheri had called for anti-Israeli actions and expressed support for the setting up of Islamic law in Turkey, causing a diplomatic row between Ankara and Tehran.

Turkey later asked Iran to recall Mr. Bagheri and another diplomat and expelled a third. Iran retaliated by expelling the Turkish ambassador in Tehran and another diplomat.

In the first hearing of his trial on Thursday, Mr. Yildiz pleaded not guilty and asked to be released from prison, but the court rejected his appeal.

Ankara state security prosecutor Nuh Cetinkaya demanded that Mr. Yildiz be sentenced to a prison term of up to 12 years for serious public order offences and causing religious hatred among people.

The trial was then postponed to a later date.

## Students suspected of plotting anti-Israeli attack freed on bail

By Rana Hussein  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Two students, part of a group of nine who were detained by security forces last week on charges of attempting to attack the Israeli embassy in Amman, were released on bail Thursday.

Imad Adileh, 16, said he and Yazid Abu Toq, 17, were each released on a JD5,000 administrative bail.

On Tuesday, security forces released seven students, all aged 16, on similar bails.

The students, all from the Arab Modern School, were arrested for questioning on April 2 on suspicion of forming an organised group, plotting to attack the Israeli embassy and distributing political pamphlets in Amman and Irbid.

"We have no idea why we were kept in detention for two more days. We were informed that it was for further questioning,"

Mr. Adileh told the Jordan Times.

The youths were arrested shortly after the arrest of three students who reportedly approached the Israeli embassy in Amman, carrying tyres and kerosene.

The students said earlier that their plan to burn tyres and distributing pamphlets was to express their dismay over the situation in the West Bank and had no intentions of harming anyone.

Mr. Adileh maintained that none of the nine students was involved with the recent attack on an Israeli embassy car in Amman.

The car, which was parked next to the ambassador's house, had its windows broken and its tyres punctured.

"We had nothing to do with this incident or any other sabotage incidents, and we were only practising our democratic right of expressing our opinion," he said.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Iranian sews lips shut in protest

GOTHENBURG, Sweden (AFP) — An Iranian refugee living in Sweden sewed his lips together to protest a deportation order against his politically active brother, the daily Aftonbladet said on Friday. Alireza Moniri carried out his protest outside the Gothenburg cathedral. His brother, whose name was not disclosed, is in police refugee detention. "If he is deported he risks the death penalty. He is politically active," Mr. Moniri said through a friend. Mr. Moniri's brother came to Sweden in 1996 from Tehran and sought political asylum. He went underground after his request was rejected, but was arrested in February. In March, Swedish immigration officials decided to deport him, Mr. Moniri said.

### Group seeks more women in Turkish parliament

ANKARA (AP) — A new group was set up this week in Turkey to try and elect more women to parliament. The group is called Kader, which means "fate" in Turkish. It wants to elect at least 55 women to the 550-member parliament in the next election, which is scheduled for 2000. There are currently 13 women deputies. "In the 70 years of Turkish parliamentary life the proportion of women in parliament has only increased from 1.2 percent to 2.4 percent," Nevval Sevincli, a founding member, said. Prominent female academicians, leading businesswomen and influential columnists are among Kader's charter members. One of their priorities is to change Turkey's civil code.

## Greek deputies urge government to invite PKK leader

ATHENS (AFP) — More than a third of Greece's deputies called on the government Friday to invite to Greece Abdullah Ocalan, the leader of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) which is locked in armed conflict with Turkey.

A petition published here was signed by 110 deputies, from a total of 300, the majority of them from the ruling Pan-Hellenic Party. Signatories included

senior ruling party figures close to Prime Minister Costas Simitis, personalities known for promoting closer Greco-Turk ties, as well as people known for their nationalist and anti-Turkey views. Only the Communist Party was not represented.

They said they wanted "to express their solidarity with the martyred people of Kurdistan," and called on the "government, local coun-

cils or universities" to invite Mr. Ocalan to Greece.

In the petition, the leader of the separatist movement is referred to as the "Kurdish Bismarck" and "Kolokotronis," a hero of the Greek insurrection against the Ottoman empire.

"We believe this initiative defends our ideas and the values of freedom, peaceful auto-determination and

internationalism," it continued.

The petition was organised by ex-socialist deputy and leading party member Michalis Haralambidis.

Five of the signatories, known for their pro-Kurdish stance, met Mr. Ocalan in 1995. The meeting provoked fury from Ankara which regularly accuses Athens of supporting Kurdish "terrorism."

The PKK has been fighting Turkish forces since 1984 to create a Kurdish homeland in southeast Turkey. Around 23,000 people have been killed in fighting since then.

Greece and Turkey, although neighbours and NATO members, have been at one another's throats for decades due to their rivalry in the Mediterranean. The tension has frequently boiled over into armed confrontation.

### JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

### PROGRAMME TWO

14:05 Cartoon — Mickey & Donald Adventures

14:30 Cartoon — Moomin

15:00 French Programmes

16:00 Gillette World Sport

16:30 Doc. — Innovations

17:00 Tilt

17:15 Drama — Blue Heelers

18:00 French Programmes

19:30 News Headlines

19:35 Comedy — Hangin' With Mr. Cooper

20:00 Doc. — Magazine-01

20:30 Prizm

21:10 Science Fiction — "Time Trax"

22:00 News in English

22:25 MacGyver

23:15 Feature Film — "Cast a Deadly Spell"

### PRAYER TIMES

04:46 Fajr

06:07 Sunrise Doha

12:36 Dhuhur

16:36 Asr

19:06 Maghrib

20:27 Isha

### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church

Sweifeh, Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661656

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Anglican Church Tel. 652826

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Amman International Church Tel. 827126

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932

Church of Nazarene Tel. 675691

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

### WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Temperatures are expected to rise today but remaining below average by about 6 degrees centigrade with winds southeasterly moderate.

On Sunday, temperatures are expected to rise further and warm weather conditions prevailing. In Aqaba, it will be warm, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.

Min/Max temp. ....01/17

Aqaba .....07/24

Deserts .....1/20

Jordan Valley .....06/23

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 11 Aqaba 20 Humidity readings: Amman 42 per cent, Aqaba 33 per cent.

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Muddah Mazharah .....820425

Dr. Wisam Hziyayin .....748563

Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyib .....630115

Dr. Munther Al Khatib .....839868

Firas pharmacy .....661912

Ferdows pharmacy .....778336

Al Asena pharmacy .....837055

Nairoukh pharmacy .....623672

Al Salam pharmacy .....636730

Yacoub pharmacy .....644945

Shmeisani pharmacy .....637660

Najib pharmacy .....847632

IRBID:

Dr. Ahmad Qanu .....381484

Al Quds pharmacy .....(-)

ZARQA:

Dr. Ziyad Jghaitim .....992991

Khalifeh pharmacy .....985417

### EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre .....637111

Civil Defence Department .....661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue .....630341

Civil Defence Emergency .....199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade .....617101

Blood Bank .....775121

Highway Police .....843402

Traffic Police .....896390

Public Security Department .....630321

Htel Complaints .....605800

Price Complaints .....661176

Water and Sewerage Complaints .....897467

Amman Municipality Complaints .....787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) .....121

Overseas Calls .....010230

Central Amman Telephone Repairs .....623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs .....661101

Jordan Television .....773111

Radio Jordan .....774111

Water Authority .....680100

Jordan Electricity Authority .....815615

Electric Power Company .....636381

RJ Flight Information 08-53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

### HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre .....813813/32

Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn .....642816

Akileh Maternity, J. Amn .....64241/2

Jabal Amman Maternity .....642362

Malhas, J. Amman .....636140

Palestine, Shmeisani .....607071

Shmeisani Hospital .....669131

University Hospital .....845845

Al-Munasher Hospital, 66727/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali .....664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen .....777101/3

Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh .....775112/6

Army, Marka .....891611/5

Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50



## King postpones Denmark visit

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein has postponed a visit to Denmark after undergoing prostate surgery in the United States, palace officials said Thursday.

The Monarch has been advised by doctors to rest for four weeks, subsequent to a successful one-hour operation Saturday in the midwestern state of Minnesota.

King Hussein has not fixed another date for his visit to Denmark, which was to have taken place from April 22 to 25.

During a meeting with a group of Jordanian journalists on April 9, Queen Margrethe II had expressed "great pleasure" to meet with Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor.

"Most people, who are aware of what

goes on, have a great admiration for His Majesty's moral and physical courage, his position in that area," said the Danish queen. "I have always admired him greatly."

"The official welcome is also a personal welcome from my husband and myself to His Majesty," continued the queen, who described the visit as proof of "understanding and peace between our two peoples."

Last April, Queen Margrethe was supposed to visit Jordan, a visit postponed due to the Israeli bombing of Cana in South Lebanon. "We should have visited last year. We still hope to do it in the near future," the queen concluded.



HRH Crown Prince Hassan Thursday meets with visiting chiefs of Arab judicial institutes (photo by Boghos)

## Crown Prince addresses visiting chiefs of Arab judicial institutes

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Crown Prince Hassan Thursday met with visiting chiefs of Arab judicial institutes where he lauded the role qualified and competent judges play in Arab societies.

Addressing the justices at the Royal Court, the Crown Prince emphasised the need to upgrade standards to deal with developments and new trends in judicial affairs.

He also maintained the importance of a recent

cooperation agreement between judicial institutes in the Arab World and the Beirut-based Arab Centre for Legal Research and Studies.

The Crown Prince described the accord as transformative of the judges' training - curricula and further stated that it would help create a data base aiding in the development of judicial systems in the Arab World.

Prince Hassan also pro-

moted inter-Arab and global cooperation in judicial affairs.

The head of the Arab Centre for Legal Research and Studies Abdul Halim Sulh thanked the Prince and outlined the recent agreement as aiming to help further coordinate the Arab World's efforts in promoting judicial issues.

Minister of Justice Riyad Shakaa also attended the session.

## Palestine Airlines begins operations out of Amman

By Tareq Ayyoub  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The first flight by Palestine Airlines from Jordan was expected to take off from Marka airport on Friday night carrying Palestinian students to Morocco.

Palestinian Ambassador Omar Khanb said that the two Palestinian Fokker-50 aircraft arrived here on Thursday from Egypt for the first time since the Palestine Airlines was launched a year ago.

He told the Jordan Times in a telephone interview that the two jets would transport 82 Palestinian students to Casablanca where they will receive aviation training financed by the Moroccan government.

Mr. Khanb added that the students came by land from the West Bank to travel to Morocco on Friday.

Officials at Marka airport said that the two jets landed at 12:00 noon on Thursday and were piloted by Emad Qiblawi and Nahi Mana'a.

Last year, Palestine Airlines launched its first flight from

the Egyptian airport of Al Arish in the Sinai en route to Saudi Arabia carrying Palestinian pilgrims to Mecca and Medina.

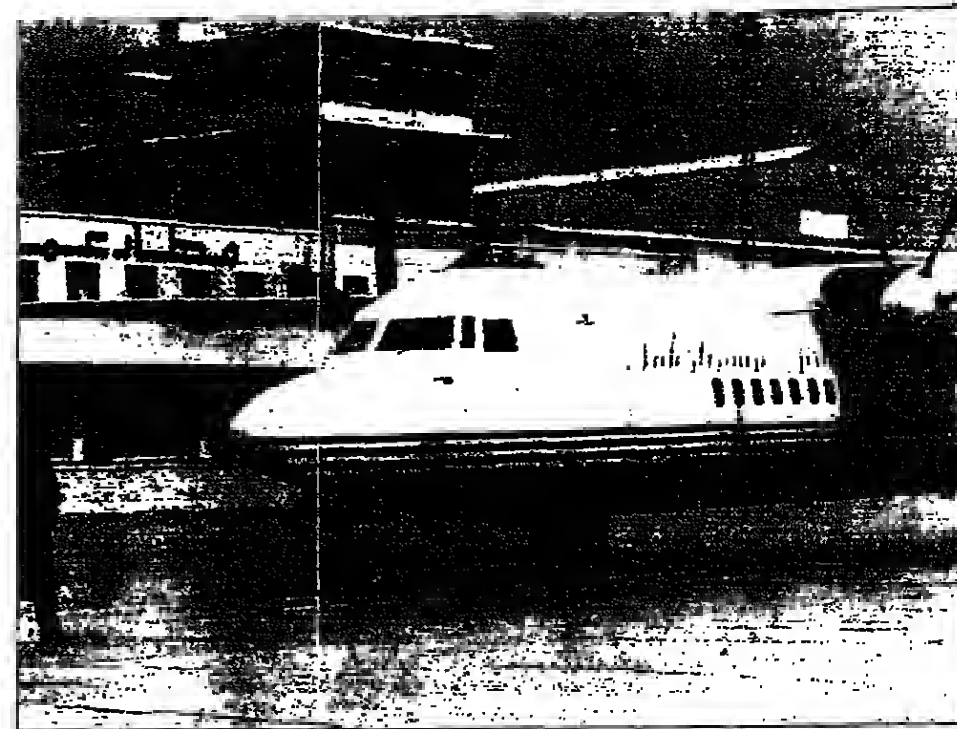
The launching of the airlines was in accordance with a 1993 Palestinian-Israeli accord that granted the Palestinians limited autonomy in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The Palestinians have been using Egypt's Al Arish airport because Israel has yet to agree to allow Palestinian aircraft to fly to the Dahaniya airport in Gaza.

The Palestinians are opposed to Israeli demands for full control over security at Dahaniya airport. The only aircraft granted landing rights there is President Yasser Arafat's private aircraft.

According to Palestine Civil Aviation Authority Director General Fayez Zeidan, the Moroccan government is financing the Palestinian airlines' instruction.

Jordan Civil Aviation Authority Director General Jaser Ziyad noted that the airline's operation was based on a Jordanian-Palestinian air transport agreements and



Two Fokker-50 Palestinian commercial planes, which landed in Jordan for the first time Thursday, before heading to Morocco (photo by George Kazeziar)

stated that Jordan would offer its services to help the Palestinians and the Palestinian National Authority in this field.

Mr. Zeidan travelled on the

planes, arriving from Cairo, and expressed appreciation to Jordan for its support of the Palestinian people.

Mr. Zeidan expressed the pride

of the Palestinian people in launching this first flight to Jordan which, they said, marks the beginning of close bilateral cooperation in civil aviation.

## Ministry of Supply to open 'farmers markets'

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Supply Friday announced that it will open marketplaces in which farmers can sell their produce directly to the public.

However, it did not specify a date as to the inauguration of these marketplaces.

According to ministry statement, these open markets will be first organised within the Amman Municipality which will provide basic services to the farmers who will be assigned special zones to sell their products.

This move came in response to public confusion regarding fruit and vegetable prices following the flooding of such.

Farmers will be required to pay nominal fees for municipal services, and the Ministry of Supply, acting in conjunction with the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment, will supervise the process to ensure that product sales will, indeed, be a direct transaction and that the new

arrangement will serve the interests of farmers and consumers alike, the statement said.

This will secure a higher income for farmers, who will not have to pay a middle party, and secure reasonable prices for consumers, it added.

The ministry statement requested that farmers take advantage of this opportunity to improve their income and ensure that their products are sold for reasonable prices.

Through an arrangement with the Amman Municipality, the ministry will allow farmers to sell their products in zones to be located adjacent to the wholesale central marketplace in eastern Amman.

The statement was issued following a meeting chaired by Minister of Supply Hani Mulki and attended by senior ministry officials and the director of the central market to discuss prices and ways to help farmers better benefit from their labour while guaranteeing reasonable prices for consumers.

## Former Sri Lankan consul released on JD 20,000 bail

By Rana Hussein  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Former Honorary Consul for Sri Lanka, Tawfiq Abu Khajil, currently facing trial for the alleged sale of habes of Sri Lankan nationals, has been freed on JD 20,000 bail, lawyers said Thursday.

Defence Attorney Ahmad Tbeishat said that the Court of Appeals accepted his request and revoked two recent Criminal Court rulings to keep his client detained.

In January, the Criminal Court resolved, to release the former honorary consul on a JD 100,000 bail due to health problems. However, the following week, the Court of Appeals ordered him re-detained.

In addition to the charge of infant trafficking (illegal under a 1928 law prohibit-

ing slavery), Mr. Abu Khajil faces several other charges including forgery of documents and official seals, and illegal possession of firearms and wireless devices.

Repeated bids to free Mr. Abu Khajil, who has been imprisoned for almost 13 months, on bail have been rejected by the court more than 25 times, according to Attorney Tbeishat.

Two other women are being tried on the same charges. They are Andrea Bustani, Mr. Abu Khajil's secretary, who is being tried in absentia, and a Sri Lankan citizen, Anourma G.L., who is accused of selling her baby.

Mr. Abu Khajil was to be sentenced in March, but the Amman Criminal Court postponed his case twice for further revision.

The same court is expect-

ed to either issue a verdict on April 22, or postpone the case for further examination.

Mr. Abu Khajil was detained by authorities, shortly after airport police stopped a Dutch couple, who were leaving the country with a child they considered to have adopted.

They were found to be in possession of forged documents.

In a separate case, Mr. Abu Khajil is on trial at the Criminal Court, on charges of raping four Sri Lankan women.

However, the four women changed their court testimonies, and have been transferred to the criminal prosecutor on perjury charges.

## Roundtable participants adopt set of recommendations

AMMAN (J.T.) — Participants in a three-day international roundtable entitled "Equal Opportunities: A Question of Rights and Humanity" Thursday concluded their meetings and adopted a set of recommendations designed to advance the status of woman.

Participants described equality between men and women as a basic human right, provided for in the various constitutions of the participating countries.

They called for incorporating this right in actual legislation.

The articles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) ensure equality between men and women, and conference participants urged the countries which have not heretofore ratified the convention to do so immediately.

To enhance women's par-

ticipation in political life, the conferees called for increasing women's political awareness through education.

They stressed the need for increasing women's participation in Parliament, and for enabling them to assume senior positions in decision-making.

Participants also suggested the introduction of education in the school curricula to promote awareness of women's rights.

They stressed the media's role in promoting women's rights and in changing attitudes towards women, as well as in eliminating the traditional negative stereotypes.

Participants also recommended that women's organisations maintain closer cooperation and coordination to influence policies and strategies on women-related issues.

Participants to the round-

table, organised by the Jordan National Committee for Women (JNCW) in cooperation with the International Movement for Rights and Humanity, have discussed several reports on the social and human rights of women, ensuring and enhancing gender equality through developing and revising legislation, increasing women's participation in political life and changing negative attitudes towards women.

They also reviewed the experiences of some of the participating countries in enhancing women's participation in political and social life.

Participating in the conference, financed by the British Overseas Development Agency, were several intellectuals, experts, human rights advocates, and representatives of studies and research centres in 17 countries.

## Arab American displays heritage through his art

By Jeffrey Buckley  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In a gallery among the gardeo terraces of Jabal Weibdeh's Darat Al Funun, Arab-American artist, Said Nuseibeh, is displaying a collection of 40 of his photographic works, depicting the Islamic architecture of Jerusalem.

The golden domed Dome of the Rock, built in the year 692 by Abdul Malik Ben Marwan, takes centre stage in this exhibit as the artist reveals many angles of the exterior as well as the rarely photographed mosque interior.

"The Dome of the Rock reached out and pulled me closer — it captured me," the artist said in an interview with the Jordan Times Thursday.

It is a building of peace, he maintained, and pointed out as to how its architect harmonised Hellenist, Byzantine and Sufic styles to create the structure.

"The role of an artist is to encourage the aesthetic in spite of politics," Mr. Nuseibeh argued in reference to the modern-day controversy surrounding the holy city of Jerusalem.

He emphasised the importance of beauty and how easily it is overlooked as today's media regularly focuses on violence and hatred. "The newspapers don't talk about the spiritual aspect," he said.

Mr. Nuseibeh did not claim to be free of political intent, however. "It's important for my community to have a voice," he asserted.

His political message, a call for the world to understand his community through art, is peaceful. "What I do has nothing to do with violence," he said. "My job as an artist is to nurture."

Mr. Nuseibeh explained that he sometimes takes hours setting up and waiting for proper lighting before placing an image on film.

As a pacifist, the artist said he doesn't "shoot" photos but "creates" them. He maintained that shooting can only describe a violent act. "I want to change the English language."

Mr. Nuseibeh expressed a desire for his people to have a mode of communication through popular art. He combines the ancient cultural tradition of Islamic architecture with the modern medium of photography.

"Architecture is human — it is stone and glass and steel and structure but it is [also] necessarily a reflection of the humanity that created it," he explains. The care involved in Mr. Nuseibeh's photographs of the Dome of the Rock demonstrates this humanity as well.

Mr. Nuseibeh is accredited with the first complete photographic layout of the holy site — a project co-sponsored by the Palestine Welfare Association of Geneva and the Institute for Advanced Study of Princeton.

Out of his home studio in San Francisco, the forty-year old artist works with practising architects of the Bay Area but said he would welcome any further opportunity to venture to the land where his heritage lies to complete more such projects here.

Since age 13 he has loved photography, naming Ruth Bernhard, of the West Coast school, as one of his main influences. He has spent time perfecting his devotion on and off in the past twenty years in Arab Jerusalem, combining his art with the art of his ancestors.

The photographs of the current exhibit as well as many others can be seen in the artist's book, "The Dome of the Rock."

Mr. Nuseibeh's exhibit at Darat al Funun on Jabal Weibdeh will continue until May 8.

## IAF calls for foreign and domestic monitors in parliamentary elections

By Khalil Shnbaki  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Islamic Action Front (IAF) has called on the government to allow Jordanian, Arab and foreign observers to monitor forthcoming parliamentary elections, due to be held in November this year.

IAF Secretary General Isahq Farhan maintained that electoral integrity hinges on guarantees provided by the government, including the issuance of a magnetic election identity card which would contain a national registration number.

He also requested the allocation of specific polling and vote-counting centres to avoid election rigging, which, he said, might happen during the process of moving ballot boxes.

Dr. Farhan stressed that the IAF does not contest the integrity of Abdul Salam Majali's government. However, he maintained "imbalances" in the 1993 elections during Dr. Majali's tenure.

The IAF has stated that it will participate in elections at the end of this month following a meeting of the IAF Consultation Council.

Special committees have been formed and are preparing for the elections, Dr.

Farhan added.

He eliminated the possibility of joining with leftist or nationalist groups, citing the one-person, one-vote system, which he deemed "uncivilised and unconstitutional", as justification for not doing so. However, he added, the IAF will support nationalist candidates in districts where there are no IAF candidates.

Dr. Farhan accused current and previous governments of obstructing efforts to correct imbalances in administrative divisions and suggested that three seats be allocated to each district.

He suggested increasing seats in the Lower House of Parliament to 100 in fairness to the governorates of Amman and Zarqa.

Jordanian opposition parties Thursday sent a memorandum to Dr. Majali in which they requested that the government respect human rights and called on the government not to interfere in public freedoms, including freedom of expression and freedom of the press.

According to an article in the Arabic daily Al Ra'i, they stated that doing so would enhance Jordan's democratic experience.

They also requested that the government deal with political parties as national institu-

tions and cease harassment of party members, according to Al Ra'i.

These parties also criticised the present interim election law, which has been in force for 8 years, saying that it is time to approve a standing election law, allowing people to elect their representatives. "This can only be achieved through a national dialogue between various categories of people, including civil institutions, public servants, intellectuals, thinkers, writers and journalists."

They also criticised the one-person, one-vote system, maintaining that "it helps the government to form the House of its wishes."

These parties also requested that the government enhance ties with other Arab countries, particularly Syria and Iraq, while severing political and economic ties with Israel, Al Ra'i reported.

The memo was signed by IAF representatives, as well as the Baath Progressive Party, the Jordan Communist Party, the National Action Front, the Jordan Arab Ansar Party, the Jordan Unionist Democratic Party, the Jordan Socialist Baath Party, the People's Democratic Party, the Jordan Arab Constitutional Party and the National Labour Party.

## Men arrested for uncle's stoning death

AMMAN (J.T.) — Police announced that they have arrested two brothers suspected of stoning their 60-year-old uncle to death in the Amman National Park, official sources said.

The source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that the two brothers, identified only as Abdullah A., 41, and Fouad, 27, confessed Wednesday to stoning their uncle, Abdullah Mohammad, over a feud regarding property ownership.

The source stated that on Tuesday, the

three men beaded to the park, located next to Queen Alia International Airport Highway, and began to argue about ownership of land and horses.

"The argument became heated and turned into a fight," the source told the Jordan Times. "The two brothers stoned him to death."

An autopsy performed on Mr. Mohammad indicated that he died from internal bleeding and a skull fracture.

Police are investigating the incident.

## What's Going On

### EXHIBITIONS

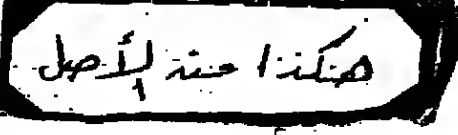
\* Display of products, for adults and children in celebration of Eid Al Adha, by Jordan Design and Trade Centre of Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NAF) at the NAF premises, off Wadi Saqra (Tel. 699141/2), until April 16.

\* Exhibition by the San Francisco-based Palestinian-American architectural photographer Said Hisham Nuseibeh entitled "The Farthest Mosque," until May 8. Also displaying works by contemporary Arab artists.

\* Paintings by Vian Shamounki at the Jordan Plastic Art Association, Jabal Weibdeh, until April 25 (Tel. 623297).

\* Paintings by Yassin Al Mohammadani at the Orient Gallery, Sbmeisani (Tel. 681303/4), until April 28.

\* Paintings by Patricia Châtelain at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh, until April 27.





## Italian soldiers land in Albanian port kicking off Operation Alba

DURRES, Albania (AFP) — The first troops of the Italian-led multi-national force to help stricken Albania landed here Friday and set off for the capital without any hostilities from local people.

Around 20 soldiers carrying machine guns disembarked from the Pantelleria troop carrier around 08:35 a.m. (0635 GMT) onto the dusty quayside along with five military vehicles.

They were outnumbered two-to-one by journalists who had gathered to witness their landing.

Colonel Enrico Nardi, who is commanding the mission, shook hands with one of the Italian officers who have been preparing for the arrival over the past few days.

"Of course this mission has its risks, but we're confident," said Nardi.

"We're here to help the Albanian people sort out their problems," said Sergeant-Major Giorgio Marquese, 24, his eyes shaded behind a pair of Ray-Ban sunglasses.

"They know that we're their friends. I don't think they'll do anything against us," he added.

The unit from the 19th regiment left the southern Italian port of Brindisi late Thursday evening. It is to prepare for the arrival of soldiers from eight European nations that will take part in Operation Alba to secure aid deliveries to Albania.

Shortly after landing, the patrol set off on its first task, the reconnaissance of the main Durres-to-Tirana road which was carrying heavy traffic Friday morning.

Logistical equipment was flown to Tirana airport by the Italian airforce on Friday morning, military sources said.

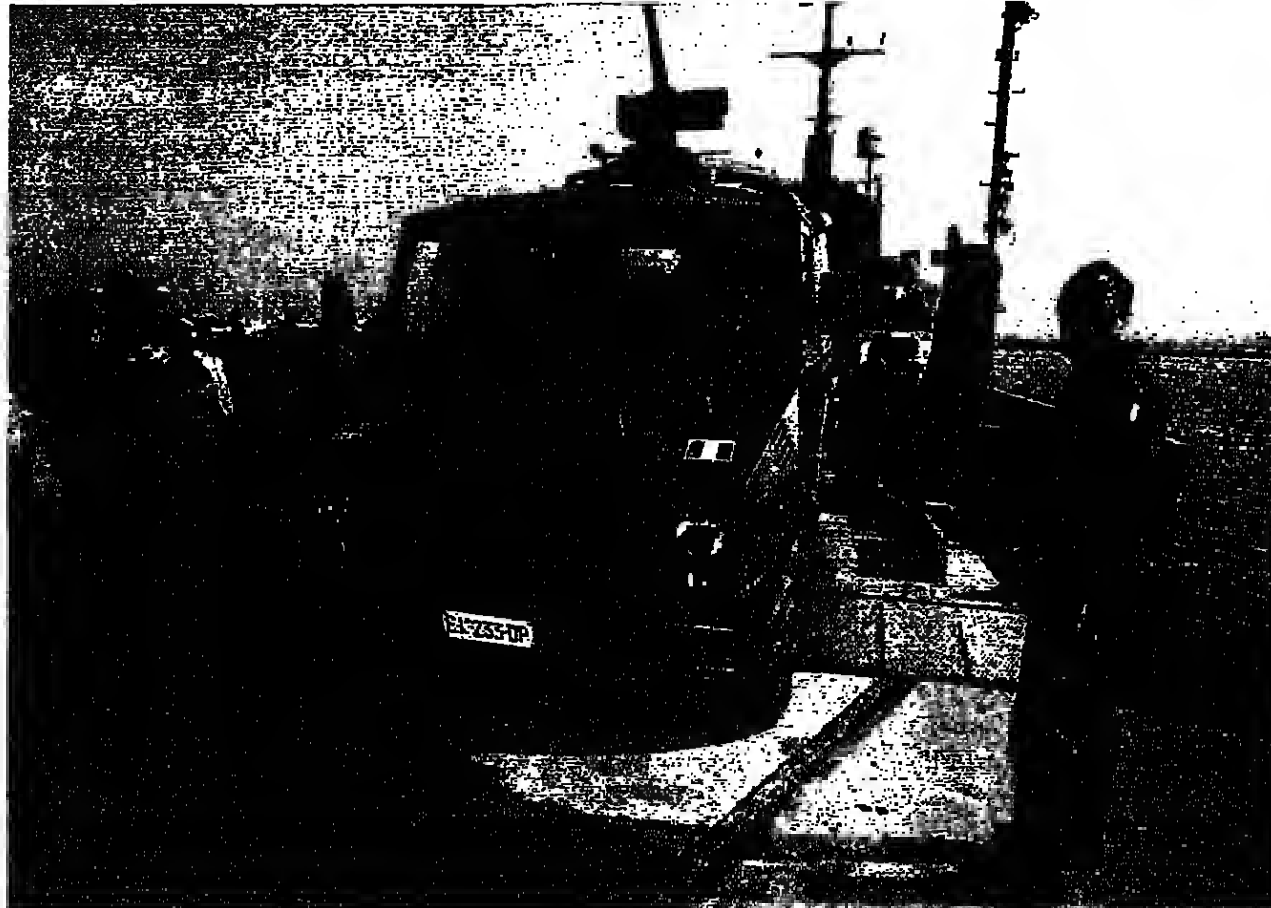
Two Hercules C-130 transport planes took off from a military air base at Pisa, northwestern Italy, carrying equipment including air traffic control systems to facilitate the rotation of flights.

According to an Albanian military source, more than 20 paratroopers landed in a military aircraft around 09:00 a.m. (0700 GMT) at Tirana's civilian airport. They were then whisked away in police cars to a nearby military airport.

The Italians' arrival in Albania will be followed shortly by more troops from Italy, France and Greece. Others from Austria, Turkey, Spain, Romania, and Denmark will arrive in the coming days to bring the total strength of the force to around 6,000 troops.

Italy, as the main contingent in the force is contributing some 2,000 to 2,500 soldiers. France has said it is sending around 1,000 troops. The first 120 of these arrived in Brindisi early Friday on board the Champlain, on its way to Durres. A further 350 troops and armoured vehicles left the French port of Toulon Friday morning, and should arrive in Albania within three or four days.

The multi-national force, which has U.N. Security Council backing, will safeguard aid supplies to Albania



Italian marines from the San Marco battalion and some 20 army pioneers disembark from their navy vessel Pantelleria in the port of Durres, on Friday. The taskforce of 20 army pioneers and a group of marines will inspect the area where the landing of a U.N.-approved force of up to 6,000 soldiers is to take place. The U.N. force is due to begin arriving in Albania on April 14 (Reuters photo)

which has been in the grip of lawlessness for more than a month following an armed uprising in the south of the country.

Besides Durres, troops will be used to secure the port of Vlore in southern Albania

and roads linking Tirana and Durres. The country's second largest port is currently out of government control but partially administered by a self-appointed committee of local leaders.

However, crime and feud-

ing between well-armed gangs have become a feature of life in the south where most of the help is needed. During the unrest in March, looters stole thousands of weapons and ammunition from army depots.

## Latest images of Jupiter's moon lend support to ocean theory

PASADENA, California (AP) — "Mind-blowing pictures" of large icebergs on the surface of Jupiter's frozen moon Europa are tantalizing scientists with the possibility they've found evidence of a dynamic ocean, which could have spawned life at some point.

The closeup pictures taken by the unmanned Galileo spacecraft during a Feb. 20 flyby have scientists more eager than ever to explore the icy moon's interior.

Their enthusiasm was palpable Wednesday as those images, including an animated video, were released at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

"It looks as though we found the smoking gun that points at this subsurface ocean," said Michael Carr, a geologist with the U.S. Geological Survey.

"These are really mind-blowing pictures," said Richard Terrell, an astronomer at the JPL. "How often is an ocean discovered? ... There is very strong evidence that there is an ocean here."

The pictures of icy chunks scattered like pottery shards provide "the clearest evidence to date there is liquid water and melting close to the surface of Europa," said Torrence Johnson, the Galileo project scientist at JPL.

But, Johnson cautioned "we have no evidence directly bearing on life."

Carr said the icy blocks, each about 3 to 6 kilometers across and resembling icebergs seen at the poles here on Earth, appeared to have drifted apart. "You can push them back together to reconstruct the original pattern," he said.

Their movement adds weight to scientists' notion that a relatively warm watery or slushy layer underlies a frozen crust that could be anywhere up to 95 kilometers thick.

In the 30-kilometre-by-40-kilometre Europa snapshot, the ice probably is slightly more than 1 1/2 kilometres thick, said Paul Geissler, a University of Arizona planetary scientist.

The ice surface is also relatively young, at about 1 million years, said Clark Chapman, a planetary scientist with the Southwest Research Institute in Boulder, Colorado.

Oceanographer John Delany of the University of Washington said the water on Europa is probably rich in salt and other dissolved chemicals from millennia of interaction with rocks and was spiked by incoming comets with the organic molecules necessary for life.

Asked if the watery soup could hold life, Terrell

said: "The water's probably bouillon, but we don't know if it's chicken soup."

While the news conference was taking place, an international group of scientists was meeting across town to discuss a proposed ice-penetrating robotic craft that might be able to explore Europa.

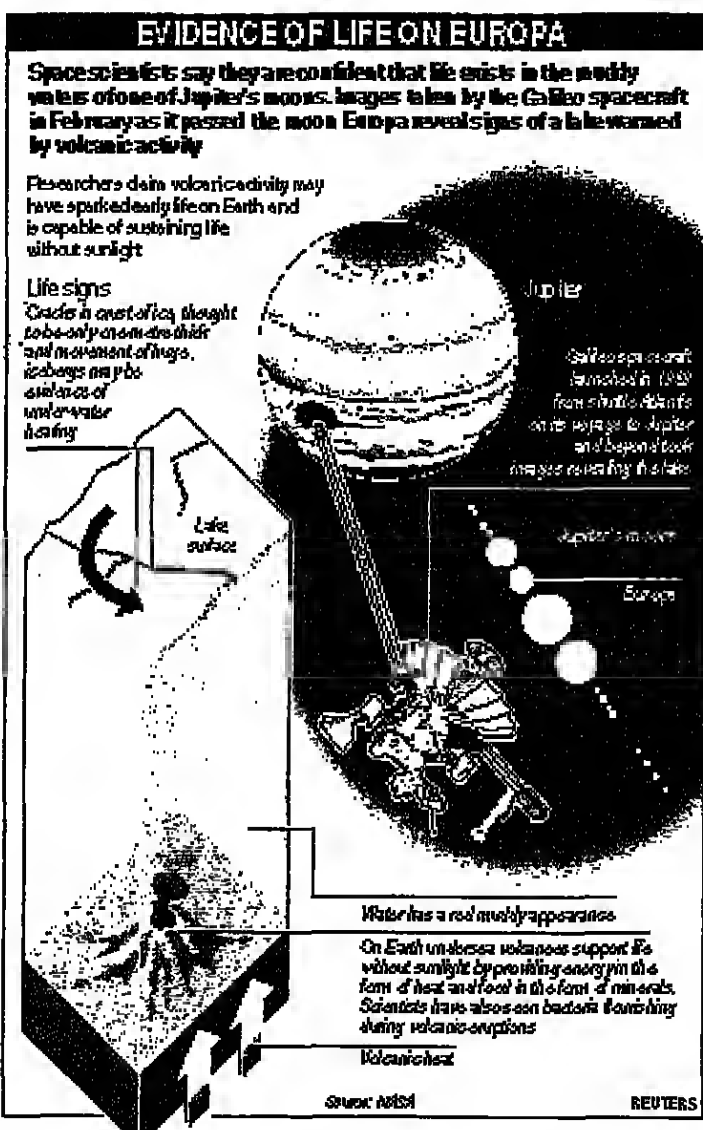
They plan to test the cryobot first at Lake Vostok, a freshwater lake beneath the ice of Antarctica.

The 4.5-foot-long (1.4 meters), 6-inch-diameter (15 centimeters) probe would carry a small, tethered submersible vessel that would emerge when it sensed water and could radio back a chemical analysis of what it found.

Delany, who looks at life near seafloor volcanoes, was enthusiastic about such a mission.

Asked if the latest pictures were enough to convince him there's life on Europa, Delany gave two answers.

Speaking as a scientist, he said NASA and



Oceanographers could design experiments to answer the question.

Then, speaking from his heart, he said: "I'm sure there's life."

## 'Solar storm slows, weakens as it nears Earth'

WASHINGTON (R) — Fallout from a solar storm slowed and weakened Thursday as it headed for Earth, lessening any threat of interruption to satellite communications or power grids, a space weather expert said.

"It'll tickle the Earth's magnetic field but it probably isn't going to drive it to really disturbed levels," said Gary Heckman, chief of space environment services for the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration.

"It'll be like sprinkles on a day when floods were predicted," Heckman said by telephone from his office in Boulder, Colorado.

Heckman and his colleagues, who monitor the weather in space, have been tracking the solar storm since Monday when the sun belched up billions of tonnes of solar material in the form of a magnetic cloud and sent it towards Earth.

Such storms have interfered in the past with spacecraft in orbit, shortwave communications and power grids. A solar storm on Jan. 6 may have caused the failure of a \$200 million ATT Corp. Communications satellite, though this was not confirmed.

These events are generally unnoticed by most humans, except possibly in increased activity and visibility of the northern and southern lights, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) said.

However, a spacecraft called Soho, which is balanced between the sun and Earth, made detailed observations of the approaching storm, calculating that at one point it was moving at 2.4 million kph.

The cloud had been expected to arrive at Earth late Wednesday, but neither NOAA nor NASA had detected the arrival by mid-afternoon Thursday.

"Either the storm missed us altogether or they were not correct in predicting the speed of the storm," said Don Savage, a NASA spokesman.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Quake kills nine in northwest China

BEIJING (AFP) — An earthquake measuring 6.6 on the Richter Scale hit the quake-prone northwest Chinese region of Xinjiang Friday, killing at least nine people, a seismological official said. The State Seismological Bureau (SSB) said the quake struck Jiashi county in western Xinjiang at 1:34 p.m. (0534 GMT). It left at least 39 injured. It was the sixth quake with a magnitude of 6.0 or more to hit the county since the beginning of the year. "So far, the rescue teams have found nine bodies and we have reports of 39 injured, of whom 25 are in a serious condition," an official with the Xinjiang Seismological Bureau said by telephone from the regional capital, Urumqi. "The death toll is sure to rise as a lot of buildings have collapsed and we are still searching for victims," the official said, adding that aftershocks and further quakes were expected.

### China, Vietnam wrap up talks

BEIJING (R) — China and Vietnam Friday wrapped up three days of talks aimed at resolving a dispute over oil drilling off the Vietnamese coast, but announced no results. "China and Vietnam have concluded expert-level consultations on the Kan Tan III," the Foreign Ministry said, referring to China's oil and gas exploration ship Kan Tan III that had been working in disputed seas about 64.5 nautical miles off the coast of central Vietnam. "The expert groups from the two sides exchanged views in a friendly and frank atmosphere," the ministry said in a statement. It gave no details on the talks to resolve the latest in a long series of territorial disputes, ideological differences and historical grievances to strain Sino-Vietnamese Socialist solidarity. Officials said earlier that leaders of the expert-level teams from the two sides were meeting in a Beijing hotel, with other delegation members excluded from the final round.

### Bangladesh sees 1st 1997 hanging

DHAKA (AFP) — A man who killed a 15-year-old girl by dousing her with fire after she spurned him became the first person to be hanged since Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed came to power in 1996, news reports said Friday. Mahmudur Rahman, 27, was hanged in the high-security Dhaka central jail early Thursday, six years after he murdered Lutfunnahar Daisy, the reports said. Rahman was sentenced to death by additional session and district judge M. Matiar Rahman in nearby Gaipur district in November 1991. Four of his friends were given life terms. The death penalty was carried out after President Shahabuddin Ahmed rejected a mercy plea from his family and the Supreme Court upheld the lower court verdict.

### Prosecutor wants Malay to forfeit money

BRISBANE (R) — An Australian prosecutor demanded Friday that a top Malaysian politician charged with trying to illegally export some \$1.2 million (\$940,000) in cash be forced to forfeit the money. Mohammad Mohammad Taib, chief minister of Selangor state, was detained at Brisbane airport last December after the cash, in various currencies, was found in his baggage. He was charged with failing to declare to customs an amount over a \$5,000. A Brisbane magistrate decided at a preliminary hearing Friday that Taib should stand trial on August 19 after Taib's lawyer asked for the hearing to be held after July 25. "The charges are going to be strenuously resisted," lawyer Terry O'gorman told the court. Taib is free on bail and was not required to appear at the hearing. In Friday's hearing, Brisbane prosecutor Simon Allen served notice that he would be pressing for Taib to forfeit the money.

### Shower of £20 notes snarls traffic

LONDON (AFP) — Police called to a road accident scene near Stratford-Upon-Avon in central England found a shower of 20-pound (£30) notes and drivers scrambling to grab the cash, reports Friday said. The accident Thursday evening was apparently caused by drivers screaming to a stop and jumping out of their cars to scoop up the money, police said, adding the bills came from a torn side basket of a motorcycle. The driver of the cycle sped off without trying to recover the money, said police, raising suspicions as to the origin of the cash. "Those people who picked up money at the scene should be warned it may have been stolen or counterfeit and should be handed in to the nearest police station," said a police spokeswoman.

### EU to hold summit in Maastricht on May 23

STOCKHOLM (AFP) — EU nations will hold an extraordinary summit in Maastricht, the Netherlands, on May 23 in order to try to reach an agreement on a new treaty for the union, the Swedish news agency TT said on Friday. The agency said the summit would focus on how the EU's institutions, commission and council of ministers will be reformed to take in eleven new member countries. EU foreign ministers were reported earlier this week to have pencilled in May 23 as the date for a meeting with Tony Blair in the event that the opposition Labour Party leader becomes British prime minister after May 1 elections.

### 'Witch' is potential juror in Oklahoma case

DENVER (R) — A potential juror in the Oklahoma City bombing trial Thursday surprised the courtroom when she described herself as a witch who believes in paganism. The young mother, whose husband committed suicide in 1993, said she could set aside her reservations about the death penalty and would consider it as a possible punishment for accused bomber Timothy McVeigh if he were convicted. McVeigh, who is accused of bombing the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building on April 19, 1995, killing 168 people, faces death if found guilty. He has pleaded innocent to the bombing. The woman, who has studied graphic art, said she attended "circles" where people burned incense, danced and sang. The soft-spoken woman, who paused several times before answering questions, said she first learned about being a witch when she was 12 years old.

### Girl points to congressman in rape case

MANILA (R) — An 11-year-old girl Thursday pointed to court to an influential Philippine congressman as the man alleged to have sexually molested her, court officials said. Romeo Jalosjos, a member of President Fidel Ramos's coalition, sat silent on a court bench after the girl identified him at the start of the trial of one of the country's most sensational court cases. Jalosjos is on trial on two counts of statutory rape and 12 counts of lascivious acts against the girl. The offence is punishable with life imprisonment. The congressman has denied the charges, saying he had never met the girl. Jalosjos was on the run for three weeks before he was captured by presidential guards in January on an island near Manila.

## Cohen tells North Korea to dismantle military threat

SEOUL (R) — U.S. Defence Secretary William Cohen said Friday that large-scale food aid to North Korea was highly unlikely until Pyongyang began dismantling its powerful military machine threatening the South.

He bluntly warned Pyongyang any aggression would be suicidal, resulting in "overwhelming damage and defeat" for the Stalinist state.

"I doubt very much whether there will be massive assistance without some kind of reciprocal action on the part of the North Koreans," he told a news conference before leaving South Korea at the end of his first trip to Asia as defence secretary.

Cohen made clear the international community would not feed a hungry nation which was pouring scarce resources into a military geared for war and was armed with chemical weapons and long-range missiles.

"It would be unreasonable to expect the world community

to subsidise and to support a domestic economy that is in a state of collapse while the military continues to operate at ordinary rates," he said.

Earlier, Pyongyang demanded South Korea apologise over a shooting incident that occurred along the border Thursday shortly before Cohen flew to another part of the frontier.

U.S. and South Korean officials said southern border guards fired warning shots at a group of North Korean soldiers who had crossed the border line. The Communist soldiers replied with shots into the air before pulling back.

"South Korea should apologise for having obstructed the normal patrol work of the People's Army and endangered their lives and they should take steps that this will never happen again," Pyongyang radio said.

Cohen expressed doubts about whether Pyongyang was ready to offer peace for food aid.

"There is still scepticism as to whether or not North Korea is prepared to pursue a path of peace as opposed to simply trying to procure additional food to keep its citizenry fed while its military continues to function and to soak up what limited resources they have."

He stressed the United States and South Korea would maintain vigilance against any North Korean aggression. The United States maintains 37,000 troops in the South.

"Obviously we believe — firmly believe — such aggressive moves by the north would be suicidal and they would incur overwhelming damage and defeat," he said.

Cohen visited South Korea to discuss the new threat posed by North Korea's chronic food shortage.

There are fears that the Communist government might be tempted in its death throes to lash out against the South with its 1.1 million-strong military.

## California's unionized nude dancers ratify contract

SAN FRANCISCO (R) — Strippers of the "Lusty Lady" Club in San Francisco's North Beach district, the nation's only unionized nude dancers, have ratified their first contract, union officials said Thursday.

The officials said the 100 unionized Lusty Lady dancers, bouncers, cashiers and other workers voted overwhelmingly to ratify a one-year agreement that provided wage increases of over 10 per cent and greater job security.

"It's a great victory," said Stephanie Batey, chief negotiator for Local 790 of the Local 790 of the Service Employees International Union.

Customers enter booths at the club and pay to watch the "exotic dancers" on stage. The push for union representation gained pace last year when strippers at the club objected that some booths had one-way windows that allowed customers to video-

tape them dancing.

Over the objections of management the club's nude dancers in August voted to join Local 790, which represents city workers and public school employees.

The final one-year contract sets a wage scale for dancers that ranges from \$12 to \$25 per hour. The dancers will be paid for the time they spend preparing for their routines and management has agreed to give them paid sick days. In addition, the one-way windows were removed, the union said.

"Now we have rights, whereas before we didn't," one of the dancers, known as decadence, told KCBS radio in San Francisco. "What we have now is protection."

No other exotic dancers in the United States are known to belong to a union. Strippers at a San Diego club set up an open union shop several years ago, but the club is no longer unionized, union officials said.





Members of Hong Kong's HMS Tamar naval base, the Royal Navy's last shore establishment in the Far East, parade during the base's closing ceremonies Friday. One of the most enduring bastions of what was the British empire closed today after a 100-year association with the territory which will be handed back to China at midnight June 30 this year (Reuters photo)

## Zaire's Shaba governor urges Mobutu to go

**LUBUMBASHI, Zaire (R)** — The governor of Zaire's mineral-rich Shaba province Friday urged President Mobutu Sese Seko to quit and said it was already safe for foreign investors to return to the region, now under rebel control.

"Mobutu must now retire due to his ill health, rather than continue a war that is futile," Kyungu Wa Kumwanza told reporters at his residence in Shaba's capital Lubumbashi, which fell to Laurent Kabila's rebels this week.

Kyungu, fiercely pro-autonomy, was sacked by Mobutu in 1995 and then reappointed last month. He is waiting for word from rebel leader Laurent Kabila on his future in the job.

Kabila is widely expected in the city at the weekend and he will have to decide whether Kyungu should keep his job or not.

The southern city's capture, with only light casualties, minimal damage and minor looting, gave rebels control of Zaire's southern Copperbelt, to add to the diamond-mining areas they seized last weekend and gold mining areas before that.

The region had attracted major foreign investment for the first time in two decades before the war put things on hold, but Kyungu said it was already time to restart operations.

"I am hoping for a speedy return of investors. Now we are liberated, they should

come and invest billions of dollars," he said.

The installations of (state mining giant) Gécamines are intact, the railways are intact and I'm very happy at that," Gécamines said it would be back to business Monday.

Kyungu said he had done all he could to persuade the army to lay down its arms and not fight and had helped negotiate the passage of officers and Mobutu loyalist troops to the airport, from which some flew to Kinshasa but most fled to the bush.

Rebels barred access to the airport Friday while they cleared the area, which they took Thursday in a 90-minute gunbattle. It was unclear if there had been

fatalities.

Five looters were shot dead in town by security guards or rebel soldiers after ignoring warnings, said Kyungu. His deputy put the figure at seven. Hospitals reported only three dead soldiers and a handful of wounded in the fight for the city.

Life in Lubumbashi was rapidly returning to normal Friday, with crowds milling around the streets, gloating over the end of the hated Mobutu era, and the first shops reopening.

The main worry of the interim authorities seems to be crowd control in the city of over one million people if Kabila, seen as a saviour and liberator, comes at the weekend.

Rebel forces continued to stream into Lubumbashi which they had approached from three sides. White flags fluttered from lamp posts and houses to welcome them.

Now holding half the country and most big cities, they have vowed to press on to Kinshasa, 1,800 Kilometres from Lubumbashi, if Mobutu tries to cling to power. They already say they are within 300 kilometres of the capital.

Mobutu, a veteran African strongman who has dominated Zaire since seizing power in 1965, had prostate cancer surgery in Europe in August. He is now back in Kinshasa.

## Row over diplomats' parking goes to U.N. General Assembly

**UNITED NATIONS (R)** — After a month-long rearguard action against new rules denying diplomats exemption from New York City parking fines, a U.N. committee Thursday bucked the issue up to the 185-nation general assembly.

The vote in the 15-member committee on relations with the host country — which usually acts by consensus — was 13 to 1, with the United States casting the only negative vote and Britain abstaining.

No date was immediately set for a meeting of the assembly, which could be shelved if the United States meanwhile meets diplomats' objections.

The U.N. legal counsel ruled that parts of the programme put into effect on April 1 violate international law on diplomatic immunity and privileges. Under the new regulations, diplomats failing to clear up their parking fines within 12 months would lose their special license plates.

Each country is also guaranteed two parking spaces outside its U.N. mission and one outside the residence of its ambassador, though this has not yet been fully implemented.

Many speakers said they would agree not to transfer the issue to the assembly if the United States promised to defer the disputed provisions pending a satisfactory outcome.

The United States said the new measures would be applied flexibly while negotiations continued for a few more days, but this failed to satisfy most committee members.

The meeting was peppered with horror stories of envoys' vehicles being fished out of parking tickets even when properly parked, or seemingly targeted by vengeful policemen.

A turning point seemed to occur when Alexandre Zmzevski of Russia, who had taken a lead in pressing for general assembly action, returned after taking a telephone call and said a Russian mission bus parked at a diplomatic space was being towed away by police, together with its driver and passengers.

## Renegade Chechens threaten 'reprisals' against Russia

**MOSCOW (AFP)** — A military adviser to Chechen warlord Salman Raduyev, who was reportedly seriously injured in an ambush this week, threatened Friday to carry out "reprisal strikes" against Russia, Interfax news agency reported.

Colonel Sultan Mineyev said "strikes" would be launched soon against Russian towns, and he accused the Russian secret services of having ordered the attack on Raduyev, Chechens carried out the attack overnight on Wednesday, he added.

Since the end of the war in Chechnya last August, Raduyev — who boasts some 3,000 armed followers — has repeatedly threatened Russia with terrorist attacks.

Mineyev said Raduyev was "in a serious condition," having undergone an unsuccessful

operation, but he did not specify what Raduyev's injuries were.

"Only God knows whether he will survive," Mineyev added.

Raduyev, one of the most headline separatist military leaders, is at odds with the Chechen leadership, but the authorities have not tried to disarm his followers.

Russian media gave diverging accounts of the attack on Raduyev, with some sources saying he was only lightly wounded.

According to the independent NTV television channel, Raduyev was driving with his bodyguards on Tuesday night to Gudermes, 30 kilometres east of the capital Grozny, when a series of explosions hit the two vehicles in which they were travelling.

One of the vehicles then reportedly burst into flames.

NTV said, citing members of Raduyev's entourage.

Raduyev was taken to hospital in Grozny for first aid, and was reported to be alive in a secret location, the television said.

Raduyev led a mass hostage-taking in the neighbouring Russian republic of Dagestan in January 1996, which ended with dozens dead after Russian troops tried to free the hostages by force.

In March 1996, he was reported to have been killed in an attack in which he was shot in the head, but he reappeared four months later after treatment abroad.

Meanwhile, Russian Nationalities Minister Vyacheslav Mikhailov said Friday that Russia and the Chechen separatists had "fundamentally different" views about their future relations.

## Record floodwaters spread over U.S. northern plains

**FARGO, N.D. (R)** — Rescuers used helicopters and all-terrain vehicles on Thursday to carry thousands of people, some sobbing, from flooded homes as rivers swollen by rain and melting snow ravaged the U.S. northern plains.

"People are breaking down as they see their homes filling up with water," said Sgt. Kim Murphy of the Cass County Sheriff's Office near Fargo. Thousands of volunteers laboured feverishly to save towns threatened by rising water as the Red River, forming the border of North Dakota and Minnesota, broadened out into giant lake.

"There's water in places that it's never been, there's water flowing in all directions. A lot of old-timers are saying the water didn't get this far in 1969. Well this is 1997 and the water has gone there and beyond," Murphy said.

Similar scenes were repeated in sections of South Dakota and Minnesota as residents

waged a sometimes losing battle against melting snow, rising rivers and last week-end's rain.

Another spring storm dumped up to 30 centimetres of snow on Nebraska, Iowa and Wisconsin but dealt only a glancing blow to southern Minnesota. Much of the flood-stricken region was spared but bone-chilling cold froze the hands of sandbaggers.

A helicopter pilot found the frozen bodies of a 29-year-old pregnant woman and her 3-year-old daughter in a farm field, raising the region's death toll to eight in the past two weeks. The deaths were blamed on accidents involving washed-out roads, fires and carbon monoxide poisoning in unheated homes, and snow-clearing. The woman and her daughter were found on Wednesday after their car was swept off a bridge by the overflowing Whiskey Creek in western Minnesota about 40 kilometres south of Fargo. They managed to crawl out a

window of their submerged car but they were soaked and collapsed 1.6 kilometres away.

"She just walked and fell to the ground couldn't make it anymore I guess," Wilkin County Sheriff Tom Mateja said. In Fargo, volunteers including students and prison inmates worked three-hour shifts around the clock to prevent the Red River from inundating the city of 75,000. North Dakota State University officials asked students to stay around over the weekend to man the dikes.

A measure of relief was felt when the river's latest projected crest was lowered by about 30 centimetres because of a previously mistaken reading of a stuck gauge. Friday's crest was expected to be 11.6 metres, still 6.4 metres above flood stage, but below the city's 12-metre dike. However officials warned of further crests if the weather warms and tonnes of ice and snow layering the landscape begins melting.

## Four killed in bridge collapse in Lisbon

**LISBON (AFP)** — Four people died and eight were injured, rescue officials said Friday, in the collapse of a huge pillar on the work site of Lisbon's Vasco De Gama bridge, the largest bridge construction project in Europe.

The latest update issued by Consortium Lusoponte, the bridge's builders, said that rescue workers had recovered three of bodies from the muddy waters of the Tagus River below the bridge.

Rescue officials suspended recovery efforts early Friday due to a high tide. A spokesman said operations would resume later in the day.

Among the four dead were two French construction engineers.

The accident occurred Thursday when a 360-tonne section of a pillar fell off the bridge into the Tagus.

The government has announced the creation of a commission of enquiry and said foreign experts may be called in to assist the probe.

Construction on the 12-kilometre cable-stayed bridge, named after the 15th-century Portuguese navigator, began three years ago. It is due to be opened in time for next year's world's fair in Lisbon.

Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) rebels have not held formal talks with government officials since March 12, when they broke down over MRTA demands for freedom for hundreds of jailed comrades.

Officials close to Fujimori say privately they will try to wear down the hostage-takers rather than make concessions to a group many peruvians consider a band of terrorists.

"The government is ready to wait as long as it takes in order to find a peaceful solution," Prime Minister Alberto Fujimori told reporters. A source close to Fujimori said this week that "the government's strategy is to wait."

Fujimori has refused MRTA demands for the release of jailed rebels but has arranged asylum for the hostage-takers in Cuba and the Dominican Republic and is believed to be ready to improve prison conditions — if they free the hostages. But a neutral diplomatic source close to the negotiations suggested the government had yielded, if only slightly, on the MRTA's central demand of freedom for its prisoners.

"The negotiations ... have moved away from principles and into concrete aspects," the source said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"There's a process of supply and demand regarding certain people (prisoners). One side says, 'I'll give you two eggs,' and the other side says, 'wait a minute, we were talking about steak,'" he said.

## Slow pace of Peru crisis talks frustrates families

**LIMA (R)** — A key player in Peru's 115-day-old hostage crisis said small advances were being made to end the standoff, but relatives of the 72 captives voiced their impatience with the snail's pace of negotiations.

Vatican representative Juan Luis Cipriani, one of a three-man team of guarantors that meets almost daily with the Marxist rebels inside the Japanese ambassador's residence in Lima, said late Thursday that behind-the-scenes talks were bearing fruit.

"I can tell you that small advances are being made which I think will lead to a good ending," Cipriani told reporters.

But after more than 16 weeks waiting for their loved ones to be freed, family members said they were tired of waiting and worrying while mediators plodded ahead with talks.

"We are demanding a solution soon to this problem. We're tired of telling people that we've been crying for four months, and we want a settlement now," said Luisa De Sivina, wife of hostage and Supreme Court justice Hugo Sivina.

"I have to trust (President Alberto Fujimori) when he says over and over that the solution will be peaceful," she told Reuters.

The wives of some hostages, many of them high-ranking officials in Fujimori's government, have taken a more public profile lately as talks to end the standoff have languished.

The Tupac Amaru

## Juppe raps defendant in France's bugging scandal

**PAUCH, France (R)** — French Prime Minister Alain Juppe reacted angrily Thursday when a senior aide to the late President Francois Mitterrand said he would breach state secrecy to defend himself in a telephone bugging scandal.

"The only person who can decide on official secrecy is the prime minister, not just any individual," Juppe told reporters in response to the statement by Gilles Menage, the former head of the Socialist president's private office. Menage is under investigation for allegedly authorising an anti-terrorism unit in Mitterrand's office to carry out widespread illegal wiretapping of journalists, lawyers and politicians from 1982 to 1986.

Juppe said he had set very clear guidelines on the issue.

"Everything that followed normal legal procedures comes under official secrecy. Everything which was done outside the law is of course not covered by official secrecy," he said. But Menage told a radio interviewer Thursday that Juppe's decision to maintain partial state secrecy in the affair prevented him from defending himself properly.

"After four years of investigation, I have concluded that official secrecy is pernicious for everyone — for the justice authorities, for the public, for the memory of those who were involved and the honour of those who are accused, and for my own legal defence," Menage told Europe 1.

## U.S. judge censured for calling British law primitive

**NEW YORK (R)** — A judicial watchdog commission Thursday censured a New York judge who criticised the British legal system in open court during the sentencing last year of a British woman who admitted killing her newborn baby.

The New York State Commission on judicial conduct in a determination made on April 2 and released Thursday said New York State Supreme Court Justice Robert Hanophy made "undignified, discourteous and disparaging remarks" at the sentencing of Caroline Beale, who had pleaded guilty to manslaughter in a plea bargain agreement in connection with the death of

her baby daughter.

During the sentencing, Hanophy blasted the woman's parents, and her father, Peter Beale of Chingford, Essex, in particular for calling the U.S. justice system "barbaric and uncivilized."

Beale's parents told reporters at an earlier hearing that their daughter's experience showed the United States was an uncivilized country with a "medieval" legal system.

Beale was charged with murder after her arrest at Kennedy International Airport in September 1994 when she was caught trying to smuggle her baby girl's corpse, hidden in plastic under her coat, onto a

flight to London. She told police the child had been stillborn in a hotel room.

Hanophy at the sentencing referred to Beale's father as "Ralph Kramden — the guy with the big mouth." Kramden was a loud-mouthed bus driver character played on television by the late actor Jackie Gleason.

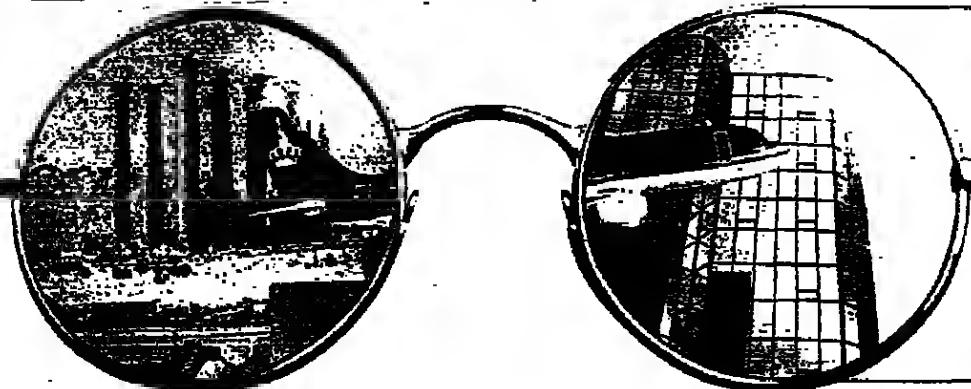
The judge also said that remarks made by Beale's mother to reporters "got under my skin."

The commission, which has censured 174 judges in the last 20 years, said Hanophy reacted "out of pique."

During the sentencing of Beale, Hanophy had also referred to the so-called "Guildford Four," alleged Irish

Republican Army bombers jailed for a London bombing and then released many years later for wrongful conviction. The British "did everything to see that they remained in prison even though they knew or should have known that they didn't belong in there," Hanophy said.

The commission said that Hanophy's remarks had no relevance to the crime for which Beale had been convicted. "His gratuitous and irrelevant reference to defendants from Northern Ireland who had been sentenced in British courts was mean-spirited and political in nature," the commission report said.



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## Peace on a tank?

ISRAELI DEFENCE Minister Yitzhak Mordechai's threat two days ago that his forces are more than able to recapture Hebron and all the other Palestinian cities and towns under Palestinian control is not exactly the kind of confidence-building talk that the Arab side would like to hear in order to take Israeli peace intentions seriously. The cities and villages that Mordechai was referring to have just been handed over to the Palestinians but only after painstaking negotiations. If Israel wants now to tell the Palestinian side that everything already achieved can be rolled back with the use of a few tanks, then the peace process that has been carefully nurtured is indeed more shallow than originally thought.

Israel cannot expect to rectify the recent events by reoccupying the little areas that the Palestinians can claim as their own. From a strictly military point of view there can be no doubt that the Israeli tanks can recapture these areas, but it would not be a field day for them. Tank warfare in urban areas can be deadly and costly for both sides. Yet the worst would not be in military terms but rather in political terms for both the Israelis and Palestinians alike. Instead of issuing warmongering statements, Israel should start heeding the counsel of even its closest ally, the U.S.

President Bill Clinton has challenged Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to match his words about his offer to accelerate the pace of the peace talks with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) with deeds. "We don't want to invest ourselves in a process that six months down the road shows that it was bound to fail from the beginning," the president told the New York Times in the wake of his inconclusive talks with Netanyahu last week. Washington wants Israel to show its sincerity by adopting a certain confidence-building policies, including the rapid construction of Arab housing in East Jerusalem, a commitment not to expand Jewish settlement while peace talks are underway and to negotiate the next redeployment moves with the PNA rather than making the decision on them unilaterally. Of course the opening of the long-delayed Gaza air and sea ports and the free and unimpeded passage between the Gaza Strip and West Bank, are also issues that have been on the agenda for so long and are still awaiting a final resolution.

If the American president sticks to his guns this time and succeeds in persuading Netanyahu to accept his modest suggestions on how to break the current, dangerous stalemate, the future may not be as hopeless as it now appears. The secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, warned in a statement to the American Society for Chief Editors in Washington Thursday that the Oslo process was all but dead due to recent setbacks. Only a determined effort by the U.S. would succeed to put the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations back on track. It is time to make this U.S. determination clear for all to see, particularly the Israeli government.

## ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST for Al Ra'i said the massacres committed by the Israeli forces against the Palestinians have no doubt buried the peace process and destroyed any chance for peaceful coexistence between Palestinians and Israelis. The columnist, writing under the pen name Meem, said that Wednesday's killing of Arab youth in Hebron coincided with the anniversary of the massacre committed by Israel in 1948 against the inhabitants of Deir Yassin, in Palestine, in which scores of women and children were slaughtered in cold blood. Since 1948, said the writer, the Israeli atrocities have continued against the Arab people of Palestine and since 1948, murder has become the profession of the fanatic Jews and the Zionist extremists at a time when their Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu persists in his Jewish settlement policies and when his rabbis direct their followers to kill as many Palestinians as possible in order to ensure Israel's domination of the Arab lands. The writer said that as long as the Israeli leaders are steering their people towards crimes against the Arab people no one can have any hope for peace.

A WRITER for Al Dustour said that lawyers and political groups have rightly objected to levelling charges against the soldier Dakamseh who killed the Israeli schoolgirls last month in Baqoura. But these groups have no right to describe the soldier as a hero, either, on the strength of his actions, said Mohammad Subeihi. The writer said that certain groups have been drumming up the Dakamseh case, trying to exploit it for political reasons while others have been using it for purposes connected with the coming general elections and accusing the Armed Forces of involving Israelis in the investigations. He said that the soldier's mother and his lawyer attested to the fact that Corporal Dakamseh was not tortured, was well treated and questioned only by Jordanian army officers and therefore there can be no justification for the current campaign directed against the government by certain political groups.

## Jordanian Perspective

## 'Jordanians anxious to protect peace with Israel, but not at the expense of the rights of the Palestinians'

By Dr. Musa Keilani

THE CONTINUING crisis in the Middle East peace process could only be exacerbated by comments, like those from the Israeli defence minister, Yitzhak Mordechai, that the Jewish state is strong enough to retake the territory it has handed over to Palestinian control.

Such comments clearly show the high-handed and arrogant Israeli approach to the entire peace process, where the Israelis obviously believe that the Arabs should simply accept whatever the Jewish state is willing to recognise in terms of Arab rights.

That is where the entire problem lies. For all practical and technical purposes the Israelis continue to be ardent believers in their own military might as the answer to all Arab demands for the restoration of the legitimate Arab rights to territory.

This explains Israel's total disregard for international opinion and the deaf ear it is maintaining against European calls for realistic gestures that would ease the way for any serious effort to arrive at a peace agreement with the Palestinians. Israel has its own prescription for a peace agreement with the Palestinians, whether the Palestinians like it or not, and is not willing to budge from that prescription, which obviously falls far too short of the minimum requirements for Israeli-Palestinian peace but one which Israel hopes to force down the Palestinian throat. Mordechai's comments that Israel can reoccupy the Palestinian lands where the Palestinian National Authority

(PNA) is in control, although laced with an afterthought that Israel simply does not want to do so, is a resounding international affirmation of the Israeli approach.

That approach also entails forcing the Palestinian leadership, including President Yasser Arafat, to go through all the Israeli-dictated paces. What Israel does not seem to realise is that it is seriously undermining the political credibility of the Palestinian leadership by humiliating Arafat and others when asking them to stifle Palestinian nationalism. Granted that Islamist militancy cannot be defined strictly as being within "nationalism," the fact remains that each and every Palestinian soul inside and outside the occupied territories is committed to liberating the Palestinian land. As such, any action that the Palestinian leadership undertakes to block Palestinian resistance, whether physically preventing a Palestinian boy from throwing a stone at Israeli soldiers or aborting suicide attacks against Israel, is chipping away the manoeuvrability of the Palestinian leadership to do what is has to in arriving at a final peace agreement with the Israelis. After all, any peace accord that is not supported by the Palestinian street is meaningless because the opinion in the street represents the conscience of the people.

By the same token, we cannot but agree with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's assertion that the current government he leads is the best suited in Israeli history to make a "real" peace agreement with the

Palestinians, for only one reason — it is a hardline government whose components are posing the most difficult question marks over the peace process and any accord that it endorses would have the support for the hardliners on the Israeli side of the divide.

Yes, in strict military terms, we agree with Mordechai's emphasis on the military might of Israel. But we do not see the Israeli army reassuming its role, without paying a high price, as the guardian of occupation of the West Bank lands which are already under Palestinian self-rule.

From what we have seen in the past two weeks, the Palestinian will and aspiration for independence and statehood has reached the point of no return and every stone thrown at an Israeli soldier is another landmark in the Palestinian struggle. And if the only way to remind the Israelis that there is a Palestinian nation is in throwing stones, then let it be so. Nearly 1,500 Palestinians fell to Israeli bullets during the 1987-92 intifada, and there are thousands willing to die in the renewed intifada.

We in Jordan are of course alarmed by the deteriorating situation in the Palestinian territories because we feel the reverberations of the tensions there. The Israeli leadership would be much better off to recognise and accept that we, Jordanians, are indeed anxious to protect and defend the state of peace that we have with Israel, but not at the expense of the legitimate rights of our Palestinian brethren.

## THE WEEK IN PRINT

## 'Palestinians want resumption of peace process despite Israel's policies'

REVIEWED BY ELIA NASRALLAH

THE LOCAL press in the past week dwelt on the Palestine question and the deadlock in the peace process. It also covered domestic and pan-Arab affairs.

In an editorial, Al Ra'i daily discussed the mission of a high-level Palestinian delegation in Washington and said that the delegation members have openly declared the Palestinian National Authority's intention to seek the resumption of the peace process and were enlisting Washington's help to achieve that goal.

On the contrary, the Israeli prime minister who visited Washington before the Palestinians has shown his government's intention to obstruct the peace process by adhering to his Jewish settlement policies and perpetuating Israel's occupation of Arab territories, said the paper.

Whereas the Palestinians in Washington are bound to demand that the peace process be resumed on the basis of U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, the Israelis have been closing all doors leading to such a solution by adamantly pursuing their illegal practices in Jerusalem and the other parts of the Arab lands, said the paper.

It is true that the Palestinians realise that Washington will not exercise pressure on the Israeli government, yet they are determined to spare no effort in seeking a just settlement.

A writer for Al Hadath weekly called on the Arabs to put into force a slogan attributed to the late Egyptian President Jamal Abdul Nasser: "What has been taken by force can only be regained by force."

Fakhri Kassar said that the Israelis seized Arab land by force and would not abandon this land unless forced to do that and hence, and in view of Israel's continued occupation of Arab land and in light of the failure of the peace accords to secure the restoration of that land, there can be no alternative to resorting to force to achieve this legitimate objective.

The writer said that Israel's expansionist programmes, its building of settlements, its occupation of the holy shrines and its repression of the Palestinians

should be sufficient cause for the Arabs to join ranks, end their capitulation to Israel and fight for their rights and freedom.

A columnist who writes for Al Dustour urged the business community and the industrialists to freeze all trade and economic ties with Israeli organisations until the Israeli government has complied with U.N. resolutions and the requirements of a just peace.

Mohammad Sbeih said that it is illogical for the Arab business community to go on concluding transactions with their Israeli counterparts at a time when the Arab governments condemn the Israeli government's actions.

Stopping trade and economic links is a stronger tool than statements of condemnation and can help enlist the Israeli businessmen's help in exercising pressure on their own government to change its policy with the Arab states, said the writer.

By freezing their links with their Israeli counterparts, the Arab business community will be implementing the Arab summit meeting resolution passed last June in Cairo and will be offering a service to their nation.

Mohammad Ibrahim Daoud, a writer for Al Ra'i, said that in view of the government's adamant stance with regard to the one-person, one-vote system, the general elections due later this year are not bound to attract as many voters as the previous elections.

Mohammad Daoud said all that the present government is expected to do with the elections law is to introduce changes in the electoral districts by increasing their number or by reorganising their distribution, but the present voting system is not expected to witness any change.

He said that under these circumstances, the Islamists expect not more than 10 of their members to win seats in parliament and the other opposition groups to have very poor chance of getting any seats at all, with the result that the new setup in parliament will be to the advantage of the government which will secure the passage of its laws with ease.

A writer for Al Ra'i

said that if the Ministry of Supply, which is entrusted with controlling prices, is to be disposed of, there will be need for the government to find a substitute entity to maintain control on the quality of goods offered to the consumers.

Mahmoud Jbour said that in the absence of a system to control the quality of goods, the markets are bound to face confusion, with detrimental results not only to the consumers but also to the national economy.

The writer said that an organisation which could replace the Ministry of Supply's role should be grouping scientists and highly skilled professionals who could determine the quality of commodities for sale to the public and for export.

Even in an advanced nation like Britain, several institutions are entrusted with the task of controlling the quality of food and industrial products, said the writer. He said in our country, a committee of highly specialised scientists can be entrusted with this task in the absence of the Ministry of Supply, adding that such committee can do a better job than the ministry.

Oreih Rintawi, a writer for Al Dustour, discussed the present status of the Baath Party, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary these days, and cast doubt on its ability to spread beyond Iraq and Syria.

The writer said that over the past half a century of life, this political party had sought unity among the Arabs and indeed had its influence in Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine after taking root in Baghdad and Damascus.

He added that the party has failed to achieve the aspired Arab unity because of its socialist ideology, on the one hand, and the persisting divisions and open enmity between Iraq and Syria, on the other.

The party has failed to attract other countries to adopt its ideology and so it remained restricted to these two countries, he added, noting that the deep divisions between the regimes in Damascus and Baghdad must have deterred other Arabs from embracing the ideology in which the rulers of the two countries believe.

## Korea: Filling dad's shoes

By Gwynne Dyer

BEING THE president's son does not guarantee an easy life.

Not, at least, if you are Korean. In both Communist North Korea and democratic South Korea, the sons are in deep, deep trouble.

Kim Jong-Il should have it made. He inherited the entire country of North Korea from his dad, the late Kim Il-Sung, without ever having to face an election or even pass a driving test.

Whereas Kim Hyun-Chul, son of South Korea's President Kim Young-Sam, has been ordered by his father to leave the country in atonement for his involvement in an influence-peddling scandal.

It was a harsh judgement: "I will see that my son suspends all social activities, behaves himself, and keeps away from me," said President Kim Young-Sam in his anguished apology to South Korean voters on Feb. 26. But real life has not been that kind to Kim Jong-Il either.

Put yourself in the shoes of the North Korean leader for a moment. When he was a younger man it was all great fun: he had his way with the country's leading movie actresses, ate as much food as he wanted (food has always been rationed in North Korea), and grew a comfortable spare tire. But it is not much fun being the ruler of a country whose people are starving.

Given the obsessive secrecy of the world's last Stalinist regime, nobody can gauge exactly how bad the situation is, but the estimated shortfall of grain is close to half of North Korea's normal annual consumption. Foreign visitors who get out of pampered Pyongyang have seen evidence of widespread malnutrition in rural areas, and even North Korea's most hated enemies, South Korea and the United States, are sending emergency food aid.

The men who run North Korea are not going short of food, of course, nor is there any detectable risk of a popular uprising by the 25 million North Koreans: the country is too tightly controlled for that. But this undeniable evidence of gross economic failure is a weapon that rival factions within the ruling group can use against each other, and the struggle is getting so intense that for the first time a senior member of the regime actually defected.

The confrontation between North and South Korea is not a struggle between "socialism and capitalism", wrote Hwang Jang-Yop, former head of Pyongyang's Kim Il-Sung University and the regime's chief ideologue, shortly before he walked into the South Korean embassy in Beijing last month and requested political asylum. It is a confrontation between "feudalism and capitalism".

Hwang was being precise when he chose the word

"feudalism". North Korea, for all its Communist rhetoric, is run along feudal lines. And in feudalism, the hereditary ruler does not inherit absolute power; just the right to try to impose his rule on an unruly collection of powerful barons and bishops.

So what? Does it really matter whether Kim Jong-Il or some other Communist autocrat rules North Korea? Does North Korea, with half as many people as South Korea but an economy less than a tenth as big, really matter at all any more?

North Korea certainly still matters — as a country with a nuclear weapons programme (currently on hold), and as the one place in East Asia whose regime might plausibly launch a war rather than face extinction. Desperate people are dangerous people, and we definitely do not need a war at the point where three of Asia's four great powers — China, Russia, and Japan — intersect.

Especially not when there are also U.S. troops and American nuclear weapons on the scene (in South Korea).

Does Kim Jong-Il's success or failure make any difference to the level of risk? That is harder to say, for nobody really knows the survival strategies, or even the membership, of the rival North Korean factions. But Kim junior is probably more open to change and to the outside world than the ancient soldiers (the equivalent of China's 'Long March' veterans) who surrounded his father.

A North Korean strategy designed to weave compromises and postpone collapse or war is better for everybody in Asia. We cannot actually be sure that that is Kim Jong-Il's strategy, but his sending a delegation to New York to be briefed, on March 5, on U.S.-South Korean proposals for talks on a permanent Korean peace treaty suggests that the right side (whoever they may be) is winning in Pyongyang.

## LETTERS

## Potential to excel

To the Editor:

I AM glad there is now the possibility to access the Jordan Times through the Internet.

I have just finished reading "Change — not easy but possible," by Dr. Ahmad Majdoubeh. I believe that Dr. Majdoubeh speaks for the majority of people living in our great country.

I think that there is a great potential in Jordan to compete in the international arena: there is a huge working force that is well educated and ready to excel in all aspects of life.

If we ensure that the fundamental and basic ground for change is built on solid foundations, then we can rest assured that the future is bright and exciting.

Essam Al Khadra, U.S.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.



# Features

Jordan Times, Saturday, April 12, 1997 7

## Boeing's Super Jumbo — 'a third less fuel and 12 per cent lighter than rival jets'

By Michael Harrison

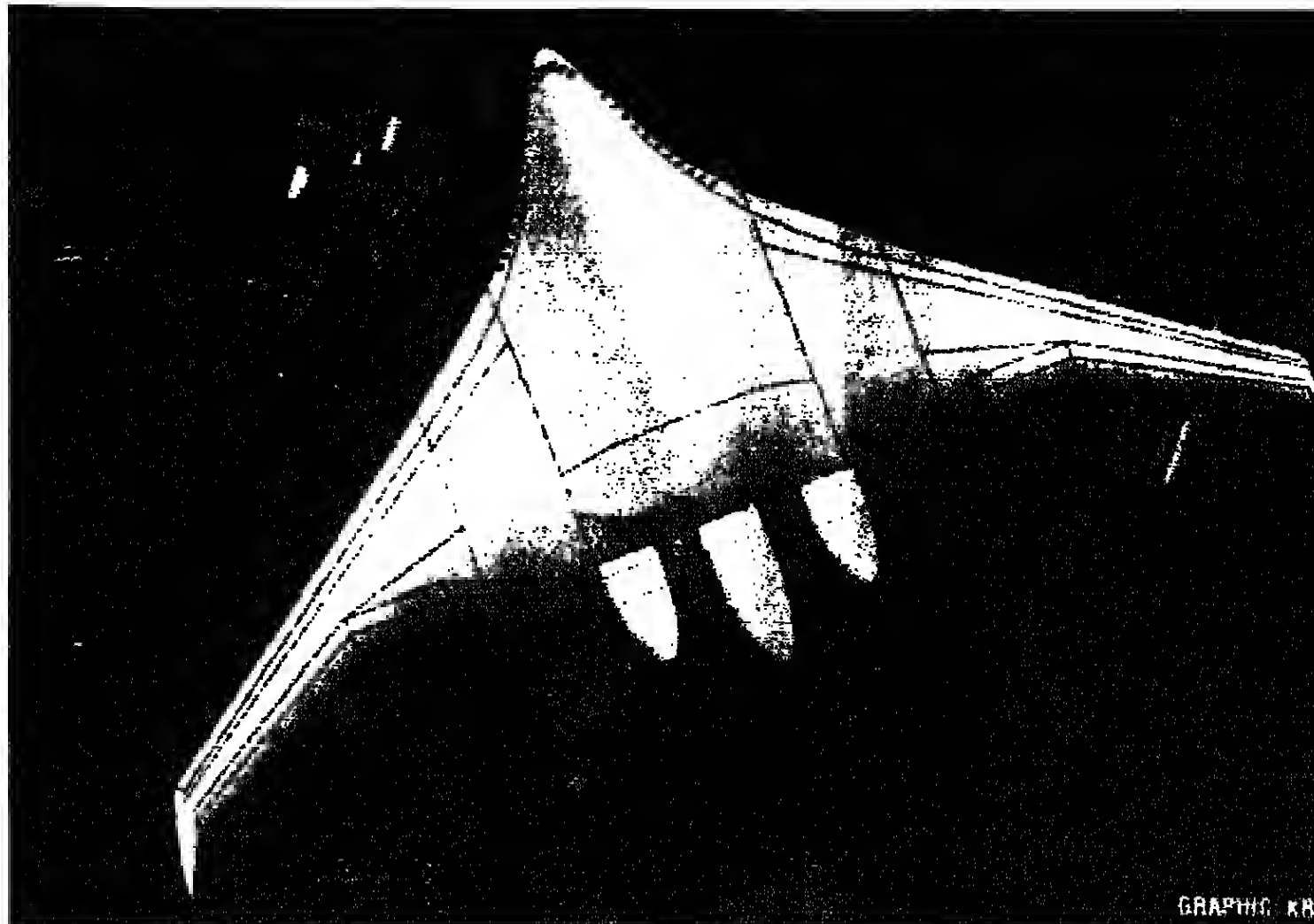
IS THIS the shape of air travel to come? A giant flying wing capable of transporting 800 passengers from London to Los Angeles for three-quarters of the current air fare?

The Americans think it might be. McDonnell Douglas, the U.S. aircraft manufacturer, and the space agency NASA are about to test fly an unmanned 17-foot model of the futuristic jet liner at Stanford University, in California.

If the \$3 million government-funded pilot project is successful, the developers plan to spend \$100 million putting two quarter-size models in the air before the end of 1999. NASA and the company have a "handshake agreement" to proceed.

At best the aircraft will not be carrying fare-paying passengers before 2010 but aviation experts believe it could revolutionise airline economics. Its blended wing body (BWB) design uses a third less fuel and is 12 per cent lighter than rival super-jumbo jets being developed by other manufacturers; operating costs could be cut by up to a quarter.

Passengers sit in a double-decker format built inside the wing. Three engines are mounted above the body at the back to cut down on drag by sucking air rapidly over the wings. A spokesman at



GRAPHIC: KRISTINA FERRIS

the McDonnell's Advanced Transport Aircraft Systems Group in Longbeach, California, said: "We now have 20 engineers working on the programme. The test flight at Stanford will evaluate the aircraft's low speed flight control. The stage

we are now at with NASA is deciding whether it is worth the expense of investigating the technology further. We want to proceed with it and when the NASA administrator Dan Goldin came to see it several months ago he became very enthusiastic

as well." At 49 metres, the BWB is only two-thirds the length of the super-jumbo A3XX which is being developed by Europe's Airbus Industrie. It is a 650-1,000 seater with a range of 7,650 miles. But its wing span, at 88

metres, is the length of an American football field. Airbus says the A3XX will cost \$8 billion to develop and will be in service by 2003, provided it gets the launch go-ahead. It estimates there is a market for 1,380 such aircraft. Boeing, the world's

biggest jet manufacturer, shelved its own plans for a super-jumbo, the 747-600X, earlier this week, claiming that demand was too small to justify its \$7 billion development costs. However, Boeing is in the process of taking over McDonnell Douglas for

\$13 million. Graham Ennis of Concor Aviation, an aerospace design consultant who has followed the development of the blended wing body, believes this could be one reason why Boeing shelved its own programme.

Other observers reckon that the cost of developing the radical new design — anything up to \$20 billion — will mean it never gets off the drawing board. But that is what was said 30 years ago about Concorde.

The Independent

### McDonnell Douglas BWB-1-1

Length: 49m Height: 12.5m  
Span: 88m Passengers: 800  
Range: 7,000 nautical miles

### Airbus A3XX-200

Length: 77.4m Height: 24.3m  
Span: 79m Passengers: 656  
Range: 7,650 nautical miles

### Boeing 747-600X

Length: 84.5m Height: 21.7m  
Span: 77.7m Passengers: 555  
Range: 7,750 nautical miles

### Boeing 747-400

Length: 70.6m Height: 19.4m  
Span: 64.5m Passengers: 408  
Range: 7,300 nautical miles

### Iran

(Continued from page 1)

with Iran. However, Germany made no calls for tougher action such as the downgrading of diplomatic relations with Iran or economic sanctions.

This was seen as being linked to its strong trade ties with Iran. German exports to Iran were worth \$1.4 billion in 1995, more than twice the level of any other country.

Mr. Rafsanjani said Germany had shot itself in the foot with the verdict while Iran would soon recover.

"It is a shame the German government could not protect its interests here," he said. "Does it know what they lose in this important country with this scandal: around one hundred years of shining friendship dating back to the World War I."

"For at least some time, our people can not forget this cowardly act." For Iran, he added, "this is a lightning and thunder storm which will pass and the sky will clear up."

He also mocked the EU reaction, saying European ambassadors had come crawling back to Tehran after the last crisis in Iranian-EU relations. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's death sentence against British writer Salman Rushdie in 1989.

An Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman also brushed aside the EU's decision to sever "critical dialogue," saying Tehran had no need of communication with a "self-centred" partner.

The Bonn government had previously been one of the strongest supporters of dialogue with Iran, intended to encourage it to moderate its policies, despite misgivings by the United States which seeks to isolate Tehran as an "outlaw nation."

Washington said Thursday it "strongly encouraged" European countries to follow its example. Most EU countries have agreed to recall their ambassadors from Tehran in reaction to the verdict.

"The EU has always wanted a constructive relationship with Iran and its critical dialogue ... was designed to further that objective. How-

ever, no progress can be possible while Iran flouts international norms, and indulges in acts of terrorism," the EU said in a statement in Brussels.

But spokesman Mohammad denied the EU decision as "unreasonable." Iran itself is a "main victim of terrorism ... while the Europeans provide a haven to terrorists," he said referring to supporters of Iranian armed opposition groups who live in Europe as refugees.

Neutral Switzerland said it is studying whether to keep its ambassador in Iran after the German court ruling.

Australia has ordered its envoy home and Britain said it would do so shortly.

"Before Switzerland takes its own steps, the foreign department will now review the situation and make the corresponding proposals to the federal council (cabinet)," a spokesman said.

Switzerland has also represented U.S. diplomatic interests in Iran since the U.S. embassy in Tehran was seized by Iranian students in 1980.

The Iranian-backed Hizbollah of Lebanon called on Germany to provide proof of the implication of Iranian leaders in the murder of the Kurds.

Hizbollah Secretary General Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah called on "the German judicial authorities to provide evidence of the implication of the political leadership of Iran."

"If they do not provide true legal proofs, it would then be clear that the case is a political judgement," he said during a press conference to mark the April 1996 Israeli offensive in South Lebanon.

"It would also mean that the German judicial authorities are submissive to the will of the United States and thus the European Union will also be kneeling down before such American demands," he said.

The mother of the Lebanese man convicted in the Germany trial said Friday her son was innocent and was not involved in politics.

Yousef Amin's mother, Souad Faour, said her 25-year-old son was not involved in the killings and called for his immediate release.

### Prince Hassan

(Continued from page 1)

nificant enhancement of inter-cultural and international cooperation and understanding," said the Prince.

Noting that less developed countries have limited access to information, Prince Hassan stressed the importance of addressing all imbalances of information flow together with active efforts to rectify the political, economic and cultural one-way flow emanating from developed countries.

"Otherwise, we will see a widening of the gap among

### Hashemite charity donates JD 50,000

(Continued from page 1)

Sheikh Tamimi said Jordan will never shirk its responsibilities in defending Jerusalem and protecting Arab and Islamic rights.

"Jordan views the people of Jerusalem as our kinsmen and their concerns as ours and Jordan will remain with them and at their disposal at any time," he said.

The Jerusalem Appeal

### Common ground eludes U.S. effort

(Continued from page 1)

anti-Israeli violence.

But State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns called for "sustained efforts."

Mr. Erakat also raised the possibility of accelerated negotiations on the final status of the Palestinian territories — a Netanyahu proposal — but stressed that Israel should continue simultaneously to abide by the Oslo accords.

Mr. Clinton has rejected this idea for now, as well as refused to convene a Camp David-like summit, in which the United States would mediate an end-game resolution.

The United States prefers to follow the incremental measures defined in the Oslo accord and does not want to speed up the process, the State Department explained.

Egypt's Foreign Minister Amr Musa said Israel should make the first move to mobilise peace talks with Arabs, the Kuwait News Agency said on Thursday.

our regions coupled with justified complaints by societies in the South (developing countries) that their lack of access to information sources and channels denies them the opportunity of maintaining a minimum rate of development and interaction with the world community which are prerequisites to peaceful coexistence among nations," the Prince said.

Prince Hassan concluded by stressing the need to redress this imbalance as the world is witnessing increasing sources of conflict and tension

aims at raising between \$10 and \$20 million.

The telephone fund-raising, which started at 12:00 GMT on Friday, includes interviews with figures from all walks of life and national songs in addition to scenes depicting the events in Jerusalem.

In addition to raising funds to support the steadfastness of the Palestinian people, the telephone also seeks to draw attention to the dangers threatening Jerusalem and its Arab identity.

### Security Council

(Continued from page 1)

had reached Iraq so far, and more was on its way.

He said seven ships carrying French and Australian wheat had unloaded at Iraq's southern port of Umm Qasr since the end of March and 13 more were expected later this month.

"But no medicine is expected until the end of April or beginning of May," he added.

The first shipments of food imported under the deal reached Iraq last month.

The source, who refused to be named, said the U.N. sanctions Committee had so far approved more than 90 contracts for Iraqi imports under the deal, including more than 40 for the purchase of medicine and medical supplies.

The source would not say why it was taking medical supplies so long to reach Iraq.

### Netanyahu

(Continued from page 1)

In apparent agreement, senior Labour officials told the television that the government needs "a total change that will bring a return to the peace process."

The Netanyahu government is comprised of his Likud plus religious parties. Elected in May, Mr. Netanyahu has halted the Oslo peace process started by the previous Labour government, bringing harsh Palestinian and international criticism on Israel.

Some of the parties in Mr. Netanyahu's right-wing coalition are opposed to handing over more territory to the Palestinians. The land-for-peace formula is the basis of the Oslo process.

In an interview with independent Channel Two television, Mr. Netanyahu said he would be able to reach a permanent agreement with the Palestinians "that most of the (Israeli) public, about 80 per cent of them, will support."

"Contrary to what people say, I am not interested in bringing about a crisis in the peace process," Mr.

He said more than 90 per cent of shipments were reaching Iraq via Umm Qasr. "Umm Qasr has become the main conduit of humanitarian goods under 986," he said.

The source said a ship carrying more than 50,000 tonnes of French wheat was due at Aqaba this month. Some 1,400 tonnes of infant formula from Tunisia and 500 tonnes from France were expected via the same route.

Also from Jordan Iraq has received 1500 tonnes of iodised salt, 500 tonnes of detergent and about 250 tonnes of soap.

From Turkey Iraq has received more than 3,000 tonnes of chick peas and white beans as well as 5,000 tonnes of vegetable oil.

Late last month the Iraqi government began distributing the first food rations from the oil sales to alleviate the impact of sanctions on the Iraqi people.

Netanyahu said, "I want to bring it to its finality."

Mr. Netanyahu spoke as Dutch Foreign Minister Hans Van Mierlo, whom Mr. Netanyahu had met during his visit Thursday in the Netherlands, held talks with Mr. Arafat in an effort to restart the peace process.

Mr. Netanyahu, who is on a two-day visit to Italy, also insisted that the Palestinians — not Israel — are holding back the peace process.

"Israel is keeping its agreements and the Palestinians are not, especially in fighting terrorism," he told a conference of Italian business leaders.

"If Palestinians fulfill their obligations, I would much rather telescope negotiations and try to do so within the span of next six months, or a few more months if it's necessary."

But, he said, that only his conservative government could reach a final peace agreement with the Palestinians.

"It is only this government that can do this, because we are able to summon the confidence of the majority of the people and to bring the necessary elements of security to make the peace process work," he said.

### Protests flare

(Continued from page 1)

fourth straight day of clashes in the West Bank town of Hebron, south of Jerusalem, hospital officials said.

Israeli security forces found the body of Edri on Thursday after Israeli and Palestinian security forces each rounded up two members of a six-man Hamas squad suspected of killing him.

Palestinian forces arrested a fifth suspect on Friday in Bethlehem. The Israeli army sealed off the homes of three suspects in Surif and informed their families it would later destroy the houses (see page 12).

The sixth member of the Hamas squad died last month when an explosive charge he meant to leave at a Tel Aviv cafe exploded prematurely, killing him and three Israeli women.

Arafat aide Marwan Kanafani acknowledged in an interview with Reuters that the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) helped to locate Edri's body. But he insisted humanitarian rather than political considerations guided it.

"This is an issue of humanitarian reasons not of security coordination with the Israelis," Mr. Kanafani said. "It has nothing to do with any political reasons."

An Israeli military spokesman said Hamas activists in a car with Israeli licence plates abducted the soldier on Sept. 9 outside Tzrifin army base near Tel Aviv. Minutes later, one of the squad took out a pistol and killed him.

Washington has sought to restore security coordination between the two sides. But Palestinian security officials demand the Jewish state first stop all settlement building.

A senior Palestinian police officer in Gaza said that Israeli authorities had informed the Palestinian side on Friday that crossing points between Gaza and Israel would be reopened for labourers and trade as of Sunday.

The Israeli army sealed off its borders with Gaza and the West Bank after the cafe bombing, cutting off thousands of Palestinian

labourers from jobs in Israel.

"We were told the situation will be restored to what it was before this closure," said Major-General Abdul Razeq Al Majaydeh, director-general of Gaza's Palestinian national security forces.

In Hebron, Palestinian police moved decisively to quell unrest Friday. When about 100 Palestinians began throwing stones and empty bottles at Israeli soldiers, the Palestinian forces formed a cordon to push the protesters back and pulled three police trucks into the frontline as a barrier.

Palestinian police also took up positions on rooftops to prevent stone throwers from climbing up there — as they have in the past — for a more convenient position for throwing stones.

Demonstrators then pushed their way into the Israeli-controlled downtown area, where Palestinian police have no access. Israeli soldiers fired rubber-coated steel bullets to disperse the crowd.

In one unusual twist, some two dozen journalists — Palestinian, Israeli and foreign — who had been covering the daily protests in Hebron staged a sit-in protest between Israeli and Palestinian lines. The journalists were angered by a Palestinian police officer, Wafi Abu Imam, who had guided the stone-throwers to target journalists, shouting that they were collaborators with Israel.

In response to Abu Imam's call, journalists were showered with stones, a cameraman was kicked in the face by Palestinian policemen and a photographer was punched. Some policemen apparently were angry about a photograph that had appeared in local newspapers showing two uniformed policemen hurling stones.

The Palestinian police commander of Hebron set a meeting with the journalists later Friday.

Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai meanwhile drew a sum of Palestinian protests, raising the possibility that the Israeli army could return to self-rule enclaves if violence continues.



## WTO predicts faster global trade growth in 1997

GENEVA (AFP) — Global trade this year is due to grow at a slightly faster rate than last year's four per cent, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) has reported here.

The report, which did not predict this year's exact growth rate, said the increase will be "led by a stronger performance in western Europe and an expansion of imports into Latin America and developing Asia."

The prediction of new growth this year is based mostly on the latest findings from the Paris-based Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The WTO also predicted that many members of the OECD, which comprises 29 of the world's richest democracies, should see their gross domestic product (GDP) grow in 1997 at the same rate as last year — if

western Europe enjoys an effective economic recovery.

It added that in China and the group of "six East Asian traders" where GDP growth rates are two to three times faster than in the OECD area, "growth is predicted to pick up marginally."

Reviewing world trade performance in 1996, the WTO said the most striking event of last year was a slowdown in Asia's growth rate of import and export of goods compared to the growth rate for the region's goods production.

The drop-off in Asia contributed in large part to a decrease in the lead which worldwide trade has held over production since 1990.

In another landmark last year, worldwide exports of goods for the first time passed the \$5 trillion mark, the report said.

But the rate of increase in the overall value of exports dropped, posting an increase of four per cent in 1996 compared to an increase of 20 per cent in 1995.

The report attributed the slowdown to a drop-off in the total volume of exports and a rise in the value of the dollar.

Meanwhile, the value of exported services worldwide also rose last year, reaching a new high of \$1.2 trillion.

Africa last year showed good growth in trade as, for the first time since 1990, its exports and imports increased in value faster than the rate for worldwide trade.

The increase was largely due to a rise in the export of fuels.

The WTO, formed in 1995, sets trade rules between 130 member states, including the European Union, the United States, Canada and Japan.

## Rubin preaches free-market gospel on Asia trip

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin preached the gospel of free-market capitalism during his six-day swing through Asia — and received a generally favourable reception.

From industrial Japan to the developing Philippines to communist Vietnam, Mr. Rubin touted the economic benefits of open markets and free-flowing capital, saying they were the best way to promote growth and improve living standards worldwide.

In what could perhaps best be described as a lecture to about 100 students there, Mr. Rubin set out an eight-point blueprint for countries to follow in the increasingly interconnected and competitive world economy:

— Prepare the population to compete in the global economy through education, adequate health care and other measures.

— Achieve a high savings rate.

— Develop capital markets and financial institutions so as to mobilise domestic savings and attract foreign capital for use in an efficient and effective manner.

— Follow sound budget policies with small deficits.

— Reduce both formal and informal trade barriers.

— Achieve a reasonable distribution of wealth in the society by ensuring that all sectors of the population benefit from faster economic growth.

— Have true competition in all market segments.

— Protect the environment.

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## Japan, U.S. fire warning shots over yen weakness

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese and U.S. financial authorities fired warning shots across the foreign exchange market bows, signalling Friday possible intervention to relieve the beleaguered yen.

Comments from Japanese Finance Minister Hiroshi Mitsuoka and U.S. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin were enough to bring the surging dollar back from 127 yen and capping it at the lower 126 yen level, dealers said.

"The dollar's rise against the yen is excessive, so we will respond to it in a determined manner," Mr. Mitsuoka told a news conference, stressing a stable yen-dollar exchange rate was important to the domestic and global economies.

"It is an agreement of the Group of Seven (G-7) industrialised nations at the February meeting in Berlin that each country deal appropriately with excessive moves in currency rates," Mr. Mitsuoka said, without elaborating on measures Japan might take to redress the situation.

Mr. Rubin said in Washington in the United States "share concern about the recent movement in the yen."

"A strong dollar is in our interest and on the other hand we share concern about the recent movement in the yen," Mr. Rubin said in an interview with CNBC television, acknowledging the yen's fall may lead to increasing Japan's current account surplus with the United States.

But Mr. Rubin declined to comment on possible interventions: "We never comment... what we may or may not do."

While a strong dollar favours the United States, a weak yen serves to promote Japanese exports, fuelling its trade surplus as well as tensions between Washington and Tokyo.

"Investors took Mr. Mitsuoka's comment, and the emerging possibility of joint intervention (by

Japan and the United States) as a good opportunity for correction following the dollar's recent sharp rise, cutting long positions," said a dealer at Bank of America.

Economic Planning Agency Director-General Taro Aso said most cabinet members agreed with Mr. Mitsuoka's view that the government will have to take measures to stem the yen's rapid fall against the dollar, while no one suggested raising interest rates as a corrective measure.

In any case, Bank of Japan Governor Yasuo Mitsuoka indicated Friday the central bank would maintain its low interest rate policy despite the widening gap between Japanese and U.S. rates — about five percentage points — that has driven the dollar up against the yen.

REUTERS

REUTERS

## The Business of Information

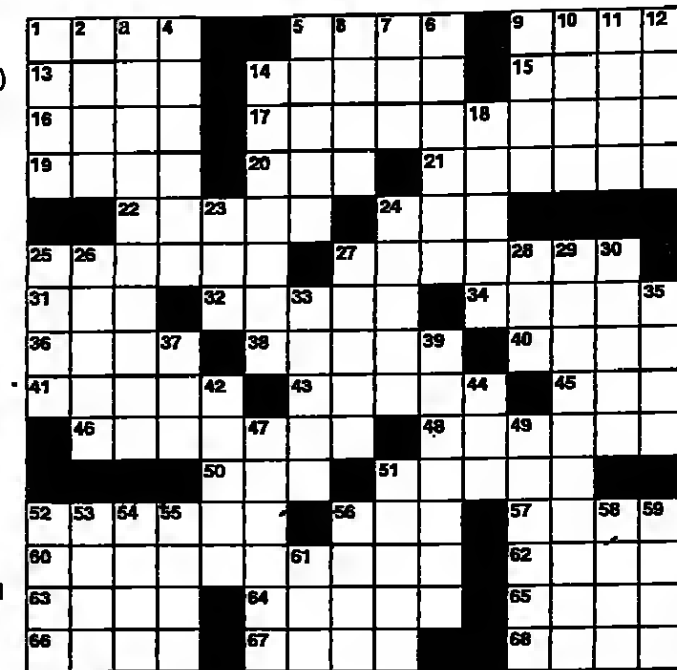
### THE Daily Crossword

#### ACROSS

- 1 Alan or Cheryl
- 5 Shake — (hurry)
- 9 — girl!
- 13 Concerning
- 14 Texas mission
- 15 Speaker of baseball
- 16 A Redding
- 17 Something far nothing?
- 19 Hub
- 20 Ripen
- 21 Yellowish
- 22 Gen. Rommel
- 24 Jose's aunt
- 25 Slinger Wayne
- 27 Lloyd Douglas work
- 31 Corrida cheer
- 32 Organic compound
- 34 Some beans
- 36 Touched ground
- 38 Records
- 40 Bismarck
- 41 Euphoric conditions
- 43 Appearances
- 45 Biddy
- 46 Shucked
- 48 Tankers
- 50 — the ramparts —
- 51 Indicator
- 52 Layers
- 56 Imitation
- 57 Mr. Connery
- 60 Traveler?
- 62 Kingly title
- 63 Part of T.A.E.
- 64 Charles — Hughes
- 65 Urges
- 66 — Gynat
- 67 Actor Andrews
- 68 Jigger of liquor

#### DOWN

- 1 Celebrity
- 2 Rectangular pillar
- 3 Garage road?
- 4 Mahave, e.g.
- 5 Even up
- 6 Bathe



by Roger Coburn



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- 7 Linguistic unit: suff.
- 8 Hockey player
- 9 Short piece
- 10 The Kingston —
- 11 Indicator
- 12 Pale
- 14 Contrary to
- 18 Sports
- 23 Misfortune
- 24 "— coins in a..."
- 25 Arkwright?
- 26 New York island
- 27 Warm
- 28 Tick-tack-toe score?
- 29 Identically?
- 30 "...Peter, pumpkin —"
- 33 More docile
- 35 "— and Lovers"
- 37 Article
- 39 Some sleepers
- 42 Laziness
- 44 Knightly title
- 47 Turned pages

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	FRF	ITL	YEN	DM	DM	DM
US Dollar	1.7237	0.6181	1.4635	126.04	1.3934	1688.70	1.6372	5.7890	
DE Mark	0.5801	—	0.3659	0.8519	73.18	0.8092	985.44	1.1242	3.3628
GB Sterling	1.6230	2.8008	—	2.3838	206.13	2.2647	2768.35	3.1458	9.4099
CH Franc	0.8810	117.29	0.4190	—	85.81	0.9488	1156.36	131.89	3.9460
JP Yen	0.0079	1.3884	0.4881	1.1642	—	1.1062	13.46	153.63	4.5970
CA Dollar	0.7168	1.2387	0.4417	1.0545	1.11	—	1218.79	1.3910	4.1819
IT Lira	0.0008	1.0147	0.3822	0.0864	1348.80	0.8215	—	11.40	3.4137
NL Guilder	0.5162	88.32	0.2177	75.79	65.00	0.7199	875.55	—	2.9915
FR Franc	0.1725	0.2872	0.1062	25.3134	21.71	0.2405	33.39	33.3900	—

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	FRF	ITL	YEN	DM	DM	DM
US Dollar	0.7080	3.7503	0.3770	3.6401	0.3038	3.6728	1540.00	3.3907	
Jordan Dinar	1.4124	—	5.2970	0.5324	5.1414	0.4291	5.1673	2178.14	4.7891
GB Sterling	0.2688	0.1888	—	0.1905	0.97	0.9810	0.96	410.63	0.9041
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.6781	9.9485	—	8.66	0.8059	9.74	4065.21	8.9946
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1945	1.0303	1.0303	—	0.8835	1.01	423.07	0.9315
Kuwait Dinar	3.2916	2.3305	12.3448	1.2408	11.96	—	12.09	5069.12	0.9318
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1928	1.0126	0.9912	0.8827	—	—	419.32	0.9232
Lebanese 1000	0.63	0.4597	2.4353	0.2448	2.3637	0.1973	2.3648	—	2.2018
Egyptian	0.2949	0.2068	1.1061	0.1112	1.0736	0.8896	1.0631	454.18	—

Energy									
Commodity	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit
Brent	17.50	17.05							
W. Texa	19.50	19.20							
Bony	17.50	17.05							
Dubai	18.25	18.05							
UL Gas	189.00	189.00							

Mid-East Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	FRF	ITL	YEN	DM	DM	DM
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4596	0.16429	0.39183	33.6349				
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.48948	0.16777	0.40013	34.3466				
KW Dinar	3.2916	5.67537	2.02799	4.83793	415.282				
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.57487	1.63452	3.89864	334.66				
CY Pound	1.8475	3.3554	1.1977	2.8578	245.234				

Metal Prices									
Commodity	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit
Gold (oz's)	347.75	348.25							
Silver (oz's)	4.78	4.8							
Platinum (oz's)	371	372							
AL (3 Months)	1578	1577							
CU (3 Months)	2290	2294							
Zinc (3 Months)	1235	1236							
Lead (3 Months)	630	632							
NI (3 Months)	7240	7280							

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)									
Period	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	4 Year	5 Year	10 Year
USD	5.58	5.72	5.83	6.10	6.25				
GBP	6.12	6.40	6.68	6.84	6.75				
JPY	0.53	0.40	0.59	0.47	0.56				
DEM	3.14	3.18	3.21	3.24	3.18				
FRF	3.20	3.22	3.25	3.31	3.36				
CHF	1.59	1.85	1.81	1.88	1.75				
ITL	7.16	7.03	6.98	6.81	6.76				

\* JOD Cross Rates

Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1478	1.1533
DE Mark	0.41	0.4121
CH Franc	0.4792	0.4818
FR Franc	0.1216	0.1225
JP Yen	0.5575	0.5603
NL Guilder	0.3647	0.3665
IT Lira	0.4153	0.4174

\* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

## HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) You should use much caution today, since strange happenings could occur at a moment's notice. Handle your financial affairs tonight, so that you will have extra funds for the lean time and in an emergency.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) Postpone recreational activities today until you can get your personal affairs in better order. Make sure you dress very nicely this evening, since your mate wants to go out to a special place for a romantic time together.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) Do what you can to relieve the tensions at home today by spending more time with your loved ones. This is not a good day to entertain guest in your home, so make arrangements in the days ahead to do so.

**MOON CHILDREN:** (June 22 to July 21) You should steer clear of anyone today who is in a bad mood, or it could rub off on you. You'll need to follow a planned schedule of career activities, so that you can achieve the level of success you are seeking.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) This is not a good time today to discuss money and property matters with anyone. If you need to make some home repair to increase the beauty and value of it, make them yourself and thereby save some extra money.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) You could get into a great deal of difficulty today if you get impatient and lose your temper, so stay cool and calm. Don't be critical of your friends or they could resent your intruding into their lives where you have no business in.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) Your plan for a night on the town tonight with your mate may have to be postponed if he or she is not feeling good, so be quite understanding. If so stay home and have a great time for in the days ahead there could be another opportunity.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) A friend who is in a difficult situation today should be helped without a second thought, this person is most deserving. Drive very carefully while on the highway later this evening and thereby avoid any difficulties.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) If there are some obstacles in the path of your progress today, remove them rather than trying to leap them. Don't neglect your bills or there could be difficulties with your financial situation for the days ahead.

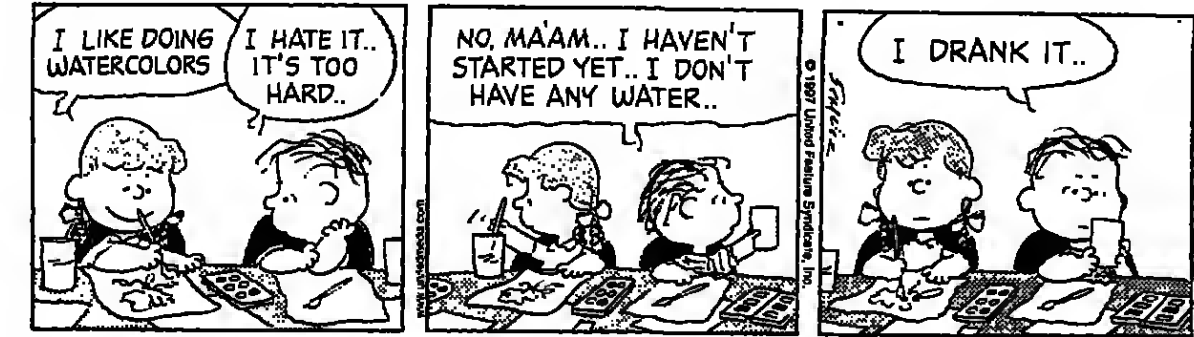
**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) Don't rely on others to assist in your progress today, however pull yourself up by your own bootstraps and forge ahead. Postpone a trip you have in mind for you and your loved ones until a better opportunity.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) This is a good day to study your financial status and correct any errors you have made, so that you will not be short of funds. Don't get upset over a little setback which you encounter, since in the days ahead will be better.

**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) Let a fellow business associate know that you will carry through today with any promises you have made, and maintain harmony with this person if it is possible. Later this evening will be good to go out one the town.

Birthstone of April: Diamond — Amethyst.

## Peanuts



## Andy Capp



## Mutt'n'Jeff





## Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

### Royal Jordanian expected to start privatisation process this week

IT IS expected that the government will this week announce the decision to transform Royal Jordanian into a public shareholding company whose shares will be wholly owned by the government in the first stage, similar to the case of the Jordanian Telecommunications Company. The practical measures to implement the second stage of raising the capital and shouldering the debt by the government will begin next month.

According to the recommendations of the privatisation committee, the government will increase the capital of Royal Jordanian from the current JD70 million to the equivalent of its debts to the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company. The debts have reached about JD150 million until the early months of this year. Other recommendations envisage the government owning the newly transformed entity for a period of the two years during which offers would be sought to negotiate selling shares to investors in the third stage of the privatisation process.

Many Arab and foreign investors, including Saudi Prince Al-Waleed Ben Talal and bank groups, have shown high interest to buy Royal Jordanian shares upon their floating in the market, but observers do not see the three stages of privatisation being finalised before five years.

Royal Jordanian's total debt amount to approximately \$650 million but this figure is mirrored by assets which include aircraft equipment and workshops that generate income. Executive President Nader Dhahabi has indicated that Royal Jordanian began halving the airline's debts by selling the Airbus aircraft and then leasing them for operations. This procedure, he pointed out, means reducing debts by \$162 million in addition to repaying the JD150 million government debt to the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company and the JD20 million "frozen account" at the Ministry of Finance. As such, Royal Jordanian will be reducing its debts by nearly \$360 million.

The airline which has total assets of JD482 million (\$679 million) has announced a plan to sell all or part of its investment units to investors. These units include the mail, the training and supply centre and Alia Gateway. Any funds resulting from the sale of these units will reduce debt and generate liquidity (Al Ra'i).

### AFM head asks all companies to submit financial statements in English

IN LINE with the continued efforts to attract foreign investments and enhance the investment climate in Jordan, Wahib Shair, director general of the Amman Financial Market (AFM), requested all public shareholding companies to translate their financial statements into English.

Only 15 companies out of 66 public companies which have already issued their annual reports, have submitted translated financial statements to the AFM.

Mr. Shair stressed that all shareholding companies listed at the AFM should give this issue their top priority.

## Prices edge up marginally at AFM

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Prices edged up marginally amid largely stagnant trading at the Jordanian stock market this week because of investor apathy, brokers said Friday.

They said speculators did not find any dramatic changes whether in the stalemated Israeli-Palestinian peace process on hopes for increased trade with Iraq.

The weekly report of the Amman Financial Market (AFM), as the bourse is officially known, said trading for the week ending Thursday was 3.3 million dinars, slightly up from the previous week's 3.2 million dinars.

The official AFM share price index based on 60 major companies closed at 152.55 points, up 0.9 points or 0.6 percentage points, from the week's opening of 151.64 points, the report said.

Sectoral indices showed commercial banks and investment houses gaining by 1.8 percentage points. But insurance stocks went down by 0.1 percentage points, services sector shares by 0.2 per cent and industrials by 0.9 per cent.

Industrials accounted for 1.46 million dinars of the weekly trading, followed by commercial banks and investment houses with 1.37 million dinars, service sector firms with 420,000 dinars and insurance companies with 9,000 dinars.


Shares of 94 companies were involved in the week's business. Thirty-one of them closed with gains, 43 slipped during the week and 20 remained unchanged.

AFM dealers attributed the slight edging up of prices to expected announcements of final figures for 1996 by several banks.

"The expectations indicate better performances than indicated at the beginning of the year, and hence the investor interest," said an AFM broker.

The Amman stock market lists shares worth a total equity of about 3.6 billion.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET														
HOUSING BANK CENTER - AMMAN - JORDAN - (BANK:JAB)														
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179														
ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD 06/04/1997 - 09/04/1997														
WEEKLY REPORT														
DURING THE LAST 3 WEEKS		COMPANY NAME	P/E	DIV	NO. OF CONTRACTS	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPENING PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE	AVERAGE PRICE	NO. OF TRADING DAYS
HIGH	LOW													
257,000	350,000	ARAB BANK	11.8	1.35	12	3400	412740	250.52	258.22	251.00	257.50	+7.00	255.120	4
1,620	1,850	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	-	0.00	27	62946	175692	1.85	1.60	1.80	1.81	-0.04	1.803	4
4,000	5,000	CAIRO AMMAN BANK	3.8	3.16	1	50	238	5.00	4.54	4.78	4.76	-0.25	4.740	1
2,800	3,740	BANK OF JORDAN	10.5	0.00	6	4044	17435	2.82	2.64	2.92	2.60	-0.08	2.801	3
1,000	1,000	HIG. EAST JRV. BK.	64.7	0.00	9	2740	1756	1.06	1.01	1.06	1.00	-0.05	1.007	3
1,040	2,250	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	5.3	6.00	11	4350	10077	2.30	2.36	2.31	2.32	-0.03	2.215	4
2,210	4,610	THE HOUSING BK.	13.9	3.88	32	7482	34375	4.60	4.57	4.70	4.77	-0.03	4.728	4
3,740	2,650	JOR. EXCH. BANK	19.2	0.00	17	12732	33763	2.65	2.70	2.63	2.65	-0.05	2.652	4
0,000	920	JOR. GULF BANK	4.6	8.42	3	410	624	0.84	0.83	0.83	0.83	-0.01	0.831	2
3,840	2,780	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	38.0	0.00	20	323216	468087	3.78	3.82	3.74	3.75	-0.03	3.796	4
1,520	1,400	JORD. RE. INV. JRV.	17.0	0.00	2	2000	2860	1.44	1.45	1.44	1.44	-0.01	1.444	2
2,200	3,150	JOR. INV. JRV. BANK	16.8	0.00	1	160	210	2.20	2.22	2.19	2.19	-0.01	2.190	1
1,440	1,300	BET. AL-KAL. (BETINA)	-6	14.42	14	1850	3041	1.20	1.14	1.44	1.44	-0.16	1.074	4
1,200	1,100	PHILADEL. INV. BK.	-	0.00	12	2478	4110	1.18	1.12	1.16	1.16	-0.02	1.146	3
BANKS SECTOR					276	241007	1366562	INDEX NUMBER + 164.36		CHANGE + 1.81%				
1,500	1,800	ARABIAN REAS INSUR.	10.4	5.28	2	550	781	1.50	1.42	1.42	1.42	-0.08	1.420	1
1,950	1,380	JOR. PRINCE INSUR.	5.0	11.30	3	536	483	1.77	1.86	1.77	1.77	-0.09	1.824	1
2,150	3,150	HIG. LAND INSUR.	6.7	0.00	5	2800	1800	2.14	2.24	2.25	2.25	-0.10	2.250	1
3,050	3,050	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	7.7	7.60	5	2800	4740	2.05	2.05	2.05	2.06	-0.01	2.060	2
2 SECTORIAL SECTOR					11	4686	6304	INDEX NUMBER + 110.17		CHANGE - 0.11%				
3,710	1,630	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	11.4	7.27	48	48333	80125	1.66	1.66	1.66	1.64	-0.04	1.658	4
8,000	8,000	JOR. HOTEL TOURISM	11.5	1.38	3	436	3408	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	-0.00	8.000	2
3,950	2,450	HIGHER MATERIALS	32.6	5.04	1	100	278	2.64	2.78	2.78	2.78	-0.13	1.800	1
4,400	3,100	JOR. CYCL. INDUST.	17.0	2.68	1	140	210	2.20	2.22	2.21	2.20	-0.01	2.200	1
2,400	2,000	SUPPLY LINES	9.9	8.51	2	2700	4345	2.35	2.25	2.35	2.35	-0.02	2.350	1
1,120	1,020	KHEL. PORTFOLIO	0.00	0.00	140	78400	14253	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.03	-0.04	1.044	5
3,000	490	REAL ESTATE JRV.	12.1	6.60	6	4454	3639	0.89	0.87	0.87	0.87	-0.02	0.877	4
1,520	1,400	JORDAN INVT. TRST.	25.2	0.00	2	2000	2860	1.42	1.45	1.44	1.44	-0.06	1.510	2
0,000	460	NOCE. REP. INVEST. JRV.	0.00	0.00	4	4300	3181	0.63	0.64	0.63	0.63	-0.01	0.630	2
7,700	7,700	ALBA	9.0	6.58	2	150	1133	7.70	7.42	7.32	7.60	-0.12	7.413	2
6,850	6,490	AD-OUTDOOR	24.1	3.42	1	100	610	6.46	6.18	6.18	6.18	-0.31	6.180	1
1,370	3,500	MTO. BAIT HOTELS	31.4	0.00	6	7000	8425	1.24	1.24	1.20	1.20	-0.04	1.228	3
2,290	2,680	ARAB JRV. INV. JRV.	12.0	6.40	20	34004	40210	3.06	3.03	3.02	3.25	-0.04	3.000	1
1,050	1,050	JORDAN EXCH. JRV.	22.4	0.00	3	100	104	1.05	1.05	1.06	1.04	-0.01	1.044	1
1,020	1,460	ARAB ASSOCIATION	0.00	0.00	18	6435	4319	1.03	1.00	0.97	0.98	-0.02	0.982	4
1,740	1,550	UNITED CO.	8.1	6.47	26	11400	19306	1.66	1.70	1.66	1.70	-0.01	1.670	4
0,000	720	UNION LAND DEV.	-	0.00	3	800	446	0.73	0.73	0.71	0.71	-0.02	0.715	2
3 SECTORIAL SECTOR					286	378654	249651	INDEX NUMBER + 102.41		CHANGE - 0.22%				
38,420	16,420	JOR. TOROADO & CO.	14.5	3.48	2	58	1820	16.42	22.36	20.36	20.36	-0.47	20.400	1
0,000	630	ATLAS	0.00	0.00	2	1000	1070	0.67	1.01	1.02	1.02	-0.35	1.020	1
3,650	3,480	JOR. EXCH. FACT.	20.1	2.95	46	8244	78864	3.52	3.54	3.52	3.51	-0.01	3.504	4
3,900	3,730	JOR. PROSTATE MEDS	33.6	0.00	5	3141	3494	3.72	4.28	4.16	4.15	-0.07	4.160	3
4,100	4,000	ARAB PORTS CO.	16.3	3.33	4	300	1804	6.10	6.06	6.00	6.01	-0.09	6.010	2
10,200	10,000	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.3	7.87	26	2780	32115	10.20	10.20	10.14	10.14	-0.04	10.144	3
6,350	6,250	JORDAN TRADING	6.8	5.65	8	476	3018	6.34	6.37	6.35	6.37	-0.02	6.347	3
1,250	1,350	WOLFE INDUSTRIES	57.7	0.00	4	1950	2454	1.44	1.54	1.50	1.50	-0.05	1.527	1
1,500	2,140	INDUSTRIAL COMMARR.	30.1	0.00	14	1028	2264	2.20	2.24	2.21	2.24	-0.04	2.230	4
6,840	6,800	JOR. MOUSTED MILLS	8.7	3.67	6	1800	12952	6.80	6.82	6.40	6.82	-0.02	6.817	3
2,750	2,440	ARAB PHARM. JRV.	20.0	5.46	26	5680	70734	3.77	3.48	3.44	3.44	-0.08	3.440	5
4,820	6,450	JOR. CERAMIC TNO.	8.7	3.46	20	7818	67373	6.44	7.02	6.44	7.02	-0.37	6.664	3
1,540	1,500	JOR. BATES HATFORD	8.3	8.00	12	5937	8880	1.50	1.50	1.46	1.49	-0.01	1.494	4
3,010	3,840	JOR. RAVER CARBON	14.2	3.50	4	320	635	2.84	2.86	2.84	2.84	-0.02	2.855	1
4,950	4,750	DAR ALAMAR DEV. JRV.	13.0	4.21	18	7536	12037	4.75	4.74	4.73	4.75	-0.01	4.744	4
2,440	2,150	ARAB ALUM. TNO.	8.4	8.82	2	1500	5000	3.44	3.40	3.40	3.40	-0.04	3.333	1
0,000	0,000	LIVESOURCE & POLYMER	13.4	0.00	41	37636	15426	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	-0.02	0.353	4
1,310	3,430	ARAB INVESTMENT	8.4	4.27	2	250	805	2.41	3.58	2.51	3.51	-1.00	3.440	1
1,310	1,050	ARAB PAPER CONV. JRV.	7.1	9.84	25	19450	20421	1.05	1.24	1.04	1.05	-0.03	1.050	5
1,310	3,050	NATIONAL CYCL. TNO.	0.00	0.00	6	2200	2356	1.34	1.25	1.21	1.01	-0.04	1.074	4
0,000	0,000	NATIONAL TRNG.	0.00	10.00	30	14200	6636	0.40	0.42	0.41	0.41	-0.01	0.407	5
3 SECTORIAL - SECTOR					325	347623	510030	INDEX NUMBER + 114.42		CHANGE - 0.85%				
GRAND TOTAL					829	812234	2135798	INDEX NUMBER + 152.55		CHANGE + 0.68%				

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET															
HOUSING BANK CENTER - AMMAN - JORDAN															
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179															
PARALLEL MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (05/04/1997 - 09/04/1997)															
WEEKLY REPORT															
															
DURING THE LAST 3 WEEKS		COMPANY NAME	D/E	DIV	NO. OF NO. OF	VALUE	OPENING	LOW	CLOSING	CHANGE	AVERAGE	THROWOVER	NO. OF		
RISE	LOW				CONTRACTS	TRADED	PRICE		PRICE		PRICE	SHARES	TRADING		
					SHARED	JD							DAYS		
.420		.380 CENTRAL GEN.STORAGE	37.2	0.00	24	34650	15546	.30	.44	.37	.63	.05	.421	1.120	5
.500		.440 JOR. TRADE PAC.	11.7	0.00	23	62850	27760	.46	.45	.44	.44	.00	.447	1.096	5
.600		.540 JOR. FISH. EXPORT.	-	0.00	69	98636	60296	.36	.41	.40	.41	.02	.407	.960	5
.430		.460 UNIDR. INV. 506	64.1	0.00	31	27100	8776	.69	.68	.67	.67	.01	.716	.113	5
.660		.600 AL-DAMLATIA 751	34.0	0.00	5	4280	2444	.65	.65	.62	.62	.03	.364	.044	3
.800		.760 AL-SHAWD INV. 753	-	0.00	37	346770	87665	.82	.83	.82	.82	.00	.570	1.431	5
.580		.560 ANAN FOOD & MFG.	-	0.00	9	7200	4084	.64	.59	.56	.57	.01	.549	.208	1
.460		.430 ANAN INV. INV. 754	-	0.00	14	11650	6693	.45	.46	.42	.44	.01	.439	.299	4
.380		.320 JOR. INDS. HAUCE-JEMCO	-	0.00	9	6150	1360	.73	.73	.72	.72	.01	.721	.164	4
1.620		1.330 NVEL. CHELORINE	-	0.00	16	6450	13741	1.41	1.44	1.41	1.44	.03	1.424	1.134	4
.520		.490 NVEL. WETTEL	-	0.00	12	7330	3729	.42	.50	.50	.50	.02	.507	.746	4
.390		.360 NAYKAN DIES & MOULDS	-	0.00	1	300	171	.60	.57	.57	.57	.03	.560	.757	3
.600		.600 UNIVL. METALS	-	0.00	5	2774	2312	.56	.54	.55	.56	.00	.550	.170	1
.600		.600 UNIVL. METALS	-	0.00	1	2743	394	.41	.61	.61	.61	.01	.359	.026	6
.620		.610 KUDSANT PHARM. 75X	-	0.00	41	33400	24106	.75	.75	.74	.74	.00	.750	.223	5
.770		.730 JORAN STEEL	-	0.00	41	8400	4794	.41	.51	.41	.51	.00	.610	.480	4
.510		.510 ANAN ELECT. IND.	148.4	0.00	8	2780	1173	.67	.97	.60	.90	.02	.659	.936	4
.960		.920 UNIDR. THOMAS 753	-	0.00	96	166778	45267	.58	.60	.55	.60	.00	.532	1.956	5
.600		.570 NAYK PHARM. 65X	-	0.00	186	1844745	464441	.50	.47	.40	.40	.60	.750	18.660	1
.800		.800 NAYK / ANKSTON 85X	-	0.00	15	13750	5562	.42	.43	.41	.41	.02	.611	.196	3
.440		.410 INDS. ENG.	25.3	0.00	2	332	358	.80	.78	.77	.77	.03	.777	.000	2
.800		.740 INDS. CEMRANK	-	0.00	3	370	267	.67	.64	.61	.61	.00	.614	.008	2
.670		.670 INDS. SAF. P. CONV.	-	0.00	32	11400	7011	.65	.65	.66	.66	.00	.614	.114	5
.700		.450 INDS. POLYMER	-	0.00	161	384450	146724	.74	.81	.76	.76	.04	.760	.836	4
.840		.730 KID. ELEC. COMPLEX	6.3	0.00	8	41440	60384	.85	.68	.89	.88	.03	.677	.864	5
.850		.830 ANAN INT. FOOD FACT.	61.8	0.00	8	41440	60384	.85	.68	.89	.88	.03	.677	.864	5
.480		.430 NAYL. MULE. ENG. NAYLICO	-	0.00	186	246206	173674	.46	.67	.66	.61	.04	.460	1.184	5
GRAND TOTAL					1016	2343371	1327370								



## All change at Bayern as Dortmund count the wounded

BONN (R) — Bayern Munich's dressing room must have the feel of a railway station waiting room at present with several players and coach Giovanni Trapattoni rumoured to be leaving town as soon as the right offer comes along.

Italian Trapattoni was reported on Thursday to be wanted by Roma next season and the word in Munich is that former coach Jupp Heynckes, said to be unhappy at UEFA Cup semi-finalists Tenerife, could be on his way back to the German League leaders.

In addition to internationals Jurgen Klinsmann and wing back Christian Ziege, who are definitely moving abroad at the end of the season, Christian Nerlinger is also believed to be ready to pack his bags.

Borussia Moenchengladbach and

Lazio are believed to be interested in signing the midfielder.

Ziege has agreed to move to AC Milan and Real Madrid are rumoured to be keen on signing Klinsmann, although the Germany captain denied this week that he has had any contacts with the Spanish club. The striker has yet to decide about his future.

Bayern, already hit by regular internal squabbling in their ranks in recent weeks, must try and forget the speculation and defend their three-point lead at the top in a home game against Cologne on Saturday.

On paper, the Bavarians should be able to deal with a team who last week put up a calamitous display against lowly Duisburg, giving away a 2-1 halftime lead to lose 5-2 at home.

Bayern will be boosted by the return of German interna-

tional midfielder Thomas Strunz after injury and fellow Euro 96 player Mehmet Scholl is expected to return to the squad for the first time for five weeks.

Reigning champions Borussia Dortmund, who are second, return to domestic football after a 1-0 defeat of Manchester United in Wednesday's European Cup semi-final first leg with more injury worries.

Injury-hit Dortmund had to send out a second-choice line-up against the English champions. They have now learned that veteran Brazilian defender Julio Cesar will be out of action for the rest of the season after undergoing a knee operation.

Wing back Stefan Reuter and striker Heiko Herrlich will also both miss Saturday's visit to Duisburg after picking up injuries in the home European tie. Reuter has a

thigh injury while Herrlich has aggravated a shoulder problem.

Dortmund will also be missing European footballer-of-the-year Matthias Sammer, who is suspended, and defender Jurgen Kohler and striker Karlheinz Riedle who are both injured.

Swiss striker Stepan Chapuisat could return after missing Wednesday's game with a back problem.

Bayer Leverkusen and VfB Stuttgart, third and fourth respectively, must win to make sure the Bundesliga does not turn into a battle between Bayern and Dortmund.

Leverkusen, five points behind the leaders, take on Karlsruhe at home while Stuttgart, a further point behind, host relegation-threatened Hansa Rostock on Saturday.



Barcelona's Albert Ferrer (R) battles for the ball with Fiorentina's defender Vitorio Pusceddu during their European Cup Winner's Cup semi-final first leg soccer match in Barcelona's Nou Camp stadium. Barcelona drew with Fiorentina 1-1 (Reuters photo)

## Marlins' Fernandez comes two outs away from no-hitter

CHICAGO (R) — Alex Fernandez came just two outs short of a no-hitter and Gary Sheffield singled in the game's only run in the first inning as the Florida Marlins edged the winless Chicago Cubs 1-0 Thursday.

Fernandez was one batter over the minimum and did not allow a hit until, with one out in the ninth, Dave Hansen bounced a one-hopper that Fernandez got a hand on but could not control. The ball stayed in the infield but no one had a play.

"Dave did a great job, because he got a good piece of wood on it, but I should have had it, honestly," Fernandez said.

"I should have blocked the ball. I just didn't want anything to go by me. It kind of got away from me and he was able to beat it out."

The Cubs then nearly tied the game because of bad Florida defence. Jose Hernandez pinch-ran for Hansen and went to second when third baseman Bobby Bonilla's throw on Brian McRae's grounder pulled Jeff Conine off the bag.

Brant Brown reached on a grounder that shortstop Edgar Renteria booted, but Renteria retrieved the ball and nailed Hernandez, who made too wide a turn at third. Fernandez struck out Ryne Sandberg for the fourth time to end the game.

"Alex made a great pitch. Ryne was sitting on a fastball — like he should be — and Alex threw him a breaking ball and Sandberg got it (his swing) started but he couldn't get it stopped," Marlins manager Jim Leyland said.

"To me, what it shows is Alex's knowledge of pitching because a lot of guys would have said I've got to throw a strike and throw a fastball and Sandberg might have hit it and we might have lost."

Al Leiter pitched the only no-hitter in Marlins history, last May 11. Fernandez managed his second career one-hitter in addition to his 10th shutout.

"It's upsetting, but it's not a disappointment. I'm very happy the way I pitched today," said Fernandez, who thanked his defence — which committed four errors.

"You can tell when hitters are standing there taking a lot of strikes that the pitcher is hitting some very tough spots," Cubs manager Jim Riggleman said. "Obviously, Alex had his pitches working and was throwing to the spots he wanted."

Fernandez signed a five-year, \$35 million free agent contract with the Marlins before the season, leaving behind the Chicago White Sox. He was making his second start in a Florida uniform, having allowed only one run in 6 2/3 innings to beat the Cubs exactly a week ago.

He struck out eight and would have been working on a

perfect game in the ninth if not for Renteria's throwing error with two outs in the fifth that allowed Shawn Dunston to reach base. Dunston stole second and went to third on catcher Gregg Zaun's throwing error, but was stranded when Kevin Orie grounded out.

Zaun, a late replacement for Charles Johnson behind the plate, said: "It was a pleasure to be in that ballgame. It was a little heartbreaking in the end for Alex and I, but it was a lot of fun."

Fernandez, who singled in the fifth for his first Major League hit, allowed just five balls out of the infield.

Fernandez gave the Marlins their fourth straight win and improved their record to 7-1, the best start in franchise history.

Frank Castillo (0-2) gave up a run and seven hits with two walks and two strikeouts in eight innings. The Cubs have lost all eight of their games and are off to the worst start in franchise history.

There was a brief incident in the sixth inning when the benches cleared for some pushing and shoving after Devon White took exception to a tag by Frank Castillo at the end of a rundown play. There were no ejections of injuries.

In Atlanta, Jeff Bagwell came within a single of hitting for the cycle and went 3-for-3 with a pair of RBIs to lead the Houston Astros to a 5-3 victory over the Braves.

Bagwell, who walked in his first at-bat, was on deck in the ninth when Brad Ausmus grounded into a double play. But Bagwell helped the Astros break a six-game losing streak at Atlanta.

Chris Holt (1-0) allowed three runs and scattered 13 hits in seven innings but did not walk a batter and struck out three in his first Major League win. Ramon Garcia pitched a perfect eighth and John Hudek allowed a two-out single in the ninth before ending the game with a ground-out.

### RESULTS

#### American League

Minnesota	7	Detroit	3
Toronto	4	Chicago White Sox	0
Texas	2	Milwaukee	0
Baltimore at Kansas City	Postponed		

#### National League

Florida	1	Chicago Cubs	0
Houston	5	Atlanta	3
Montreal at St. Louis	Postponed		
Cincinnati at Colorado	Postponed		

## Top players lined up for Italian Open

ROME (R) — Virtually all tennis's top men and women players have entered the Italian Open starting on May 3.

The men's tournament, with total prizemoney of \$2.3 million at stake, has attracted all but three of the world's top 50 players, with Pete Sampras, Thomas Muster and Michael Chang confirmed starters.

World No. 1 Martina Hingis and Monica Seles head the list in the women's tournament, although Steffi Graf is a notable absentee.

Franco Bartoni, the director of the tournament, said he was pleased with the expected turnout. "In the men's game we have all the players up to and including number 22 in the rankings. It's a very high standard field."

Andre Agassi, ranked 23, is the only big name missing from a men's field of 64 players. Two wild card entries will be given to Italian players Renzo Furlan and Omar Camporese.

Thomas Muster of Germany has won the clay-court tournament at the Foro Italico for the past two years and Spain's Conchita Martinez has taken the women's title every year since 1993.

## Group 3 World Cup qualifiers UAE beat Bahrain 2-1

By Aileen Bannayan  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

THE UNITED Arab Emirates (UAE) Friday beat Bahrain 2-1 to take the lead atop Group 3 in the first round/first leg Asian World Cup qualifiers currently underway in Manama, Bahrain.

Jordan will be playing hosts Bahrain April 14 in the other first round/first leg Group 3 match.

The UAE led 1-0 after a superb header midway through the first half. They then took a 2-0 lead before Bahrain scored their sole goal.

The win was crucial for the UAE after they were held to a goalless draw with Jordan in the opening match of the qualifiers.

The draw was unexpected in Asian soccer circles as the UAE is a 1990 World Cup qualifier, and is currently Asia's second ranked team.

Onlookers expected that the UAE would easily beat Jordan and have an easy path through the qualifiers especially since they will be hosting the second leg of the qualifiers which start in Sbarjah April 19. Only the group winner will qualify to the second round.

Jordan was commended for their good showing despite losing the chance to beat the UAE who played most of the game with 10 players after the referee sus-

pected their goalie who stopped a definite goal by Jiryes Tadros.

This is the fourth time Jordan plays in World Cup qualifying matches after taking part in first round qualifiers for Mexico 96, Italy 90, and USA 94.

Jordan's record in eight friendly internationals in preparation for the qualifiers included three defeats, three goalless draws and two wins, both over Oman.

The Kingdom's team played two matches against Lebanon losing 1-0 in Beirut and drawing 0-0 in Amman.

Jordan twice lost 1-0 to the Iraqi team in Baghdad while both matches against Syria ended in goalless draws.

The Kingdom's only wins were 2-0 and 4-1 in Muscat. The team's training camps and preparations cost the Jordan Soccer Federation over JD 60,000.

Thirty-six Asian countries are contesting the first round World Cup qualifiers and have been divided into ten groups. Some groups have already begun their qualifiers.

The 10 groups winners will qualify for the second round where the teams will

be divided into two groups. The first two from each group will then contest the Asian finals.

The first three qualify directly for the 1998 World Cup in France while the winner of a play-off between the fourth team and the Oceania Zone winner will also qualify.

Jordan's 31-member delegation includes nine officials including referee Dabbah Egeidat, team manager Abulatif Abdul Majid, coaches Mohammad Awad and Adnan Masud, goalkeepers' coach Basem Tayyem, and physiotherapist Hussein Atallah.

The Kingdom's initial lineup includes Mu'taz Rishah, Yousef Ammouri, Mohammad Mahadin, Amjad Taher, Hussein Shananeh, Faisal Ibrahim, Subhi Suleiman, Jamal Abu Abed, Adnan Awad, Nart Yada, Jiryes Tadros and Badran Shaqran.

The team also includes Ahmad Abu Nasouh, Mohammad Abu Daoud, Mohammad Khaz'ali, Abdullah Abu Zame'b, Isam Mahmoud, Munir Abu Hantash, Bassam Al Khatib, Ahmad Khalil, Ja'far Hammad and Hassounah Sheikh.

### GROUP 3 STANDINGS

Team	W	L	D	GF	GA	Pts
UAE	1	0	1	2	1	4
Jordan	0	1	0	0	0	1
Bahrain	1	0	0	1	2	1

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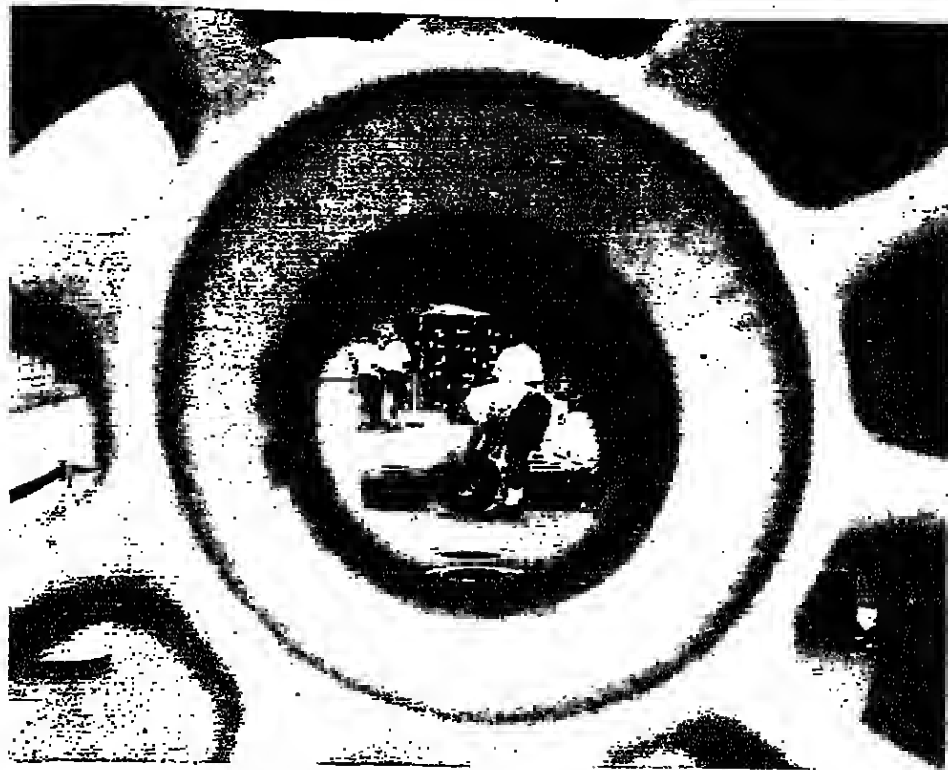
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A crew member of team Stewart-Ford is seen readying tyres through the spokes of a tyre on pit lane at the Oscar Galvez race track in Buenos Aires. The Argentine Grand Prix will take place in Buenos Aires April 13 (Reuters photo)

## Quiet man out to revive Ferrari in noisiest of sports

BUENOS AIRES (R) — Ross Brawn is one of the quiet men in the noisiest of sports, a bespectacled Boffin whose technical expertise has brought him the task of guiding Ferrari back to glory.

It is a role that has stimulated, attracted and beaten many men before him. But if he is successful, he will become the first technical director since Gordon Murray, who won titles with Brabham and McLaren, to land a world motor racing title with two different teams.

The prospect, for Brawn, is intriguing and daunting. But he has shown no sign of nerves since taking over at Ferrari's Maranello base last December and renewing his championship-winning partnership with Michael Schumacher.

Brawn and the German won titles in two years together at Benetton in 1994 and 1995 and Ferrari president Luca di Montezemolo hopes their reunion will bring more success.

When, Bravo, 43, left Benetton for Ferrari, he traded security, a team he knew well and his English country garden for alleged unpredictability and political pyrotechnics in Italy.

The challenge of helping Ferrari turn the tide and land their first Drivers' title since Jody Scheckter in 1979 persuaded him to take the risk. Since then former Benetton colleague Rory Byrne has joined Ferrari as chief designer.

"I can't change things overnight," admitted Brawn. "But what I think we can do is go from black to grey to white. And this has been accepted. Rory and I were five years together, at Benetton and have our own way of working."

"Our new programme is already in place and under way — and no-one has complained so far. But it is difficult for me to judge how we are doing

overall because I cannot refer to Ferrari's performances last season. I can only judge on what has happened this year.

"We still have a lot of work to do to improve some of the systems and one or two of the team's general approaches. But it has helped a lot to have the technical direction based in Maranello because people have a reference point."

Previously Ferrari had employed another Briton, John Barnard, to design their cars and direct the team from his headquarters in Britain.

"Despite the best intentions, it is not practical to have a design-technical group in one country and a separate racing team in another," Brawn said.

"I suppose, too, it has been easy for me to come to and change things a little because no-one at Maranello was doing this job before. It is a new position. There are no predecessors to worry about."

"Long-term planning, for example, was something lacking at Ferrari. We are trying to put this in place. But our day-to-day objective is, obviously, to be competitive though our long term goals of good planning are a key factor at the same time."

At Benetton, he was known as a strategist and was highly-respected by other teams. At Ferrari, however, he has been cautious about making big changes.

"But I have initiated a system on the pit wall and I am much more comfortable with that. But there are things in place at Ferrari which I am just assessing, to see what happens. As with anything, there are some things I think are good and some I think are not."

"What I feel I can give to Ferrari is to see the right direction, maybe where others can't. This can be mid-race, altering a planned pit-stop or

something concerning future planning."

He foresees no problem getting along with his drivers, Schumacher and Eddie Irvine.

"I always found it easy with Michael because he likes the work and so do I," said Brawn. "That is the same for Eddie, too, but he has a rather different outlook on other aspects of his life..."

He sees Schumacher as clearly the number one driver on the grid. "That has not changed. There is no other driver to compare with him. And as far as I can see, he is not easing off at all."

"He seems to work just as hard, or harder, and he is as fit or fitter than ever before. He has reviewed and revised all his regimes in his life, completely. He has a new fitness routine more particularly directed to his needs."

"Also, he is still very much a tremendous worker. He had enormous stamina. When he is in the car and I am talking to him, he speaks as you and I are speaking now. There is never any sign of physical stress from him. Never. That is remarkable. He is a great asset to Ferrari and everyone knows that."

Modesty forbade Brawn, of course, from suggesting his contribution could be the one to help land Schumacher his third world title.

## Tommi Makinen bids to extend rally lead

LLORET DEL MAR, Spain (R) — Reigning world rally champion Tommi Makinen of Finland heads into Monday's Catalunya Rally, the fifth round of the championship, locked in a thrilling three-way battle with Briton Colin McRae and Spaniard Carlos Sainz.

Makinen, who drives for Mitsubishi, took the lead with a victory in Portugal three weeks ago and is confident his car will be well-suited to the asphalt stages after recent testing.

For McRae, who lies five points behind Makinen in the championship table, the event is likely to prove crucial to his hopes of winning the title. He won the rally last year after a thrilling fight with Subaru teammate, Italian Piero Liatti, who returns to the outfit for this event.

"Last year was a tough but satisfying victory," said McRae, the 1995 world champion. "It was one of the most unbelievable battles I have ever been involved in and I'm sure Piero will be keen to settle the score after being so close last year."

Liatti is an acknowledged tarmac specialist and is regarded by many to be the firm favourite for victory on this event. After his win on the season opening Monte Carlo rally it could also see him take a surprise lead in the World Championship.

The home fans, however, will expect nothing less than a victory for national hero Sainz in the Ford, who crashed out of last November's event on the second stage.

"The support we get is fantastic and competing in my home country is always a great occasion," said the winner of the 1992 and 1995 rallies. "In 1996 we were unlucky to roll the ford when challenging for the lead. Now we have a great chance to make amends."

The rally has established itself as one of the most popular and demanding events on the calendar since it joined the World Championship in 1991.

This year's event, which starts on Monday, is based in the Mediterranean resort of Lloret Del Mar, situated between the Pyrenees and Barcelona.

## Bulls beat Knicks; Nuggets lose in OT

MIAMI (AP) — The Miami Heat beat Detroit 93-83 Thursday night, then clinched their first Atlantic Division championship 15 minutes later when second-place New York lost to Chicago.

The title assures Miami of the No. 2 seed in the Eastern Conference playoffs behind the Bulls. The Heat will have the home-court advantage through the first two rounds, and they won't face the Bulls before the conference finals.

Tim Hardaway scored 30 points for the Heat, including the last of four consecutive 3-pointers for Miami in the fourth quarter. Alonzo Mourning added 26 points for Miami, which has won six in a row.

Detroit's Grant Hill just missed a triple-double with 21 points, nine rebounds and eight assists. Terry Mills scored 24 points for the Pistons, who have lost three straight. Bulls 105, Knicks 103.

In New York, Michael Jordan scored 20 of his 34 points in the final 7 1/2 minutes and Luc Longley made two free throws with 5.4 seconds left after rebounding a rare Jordan miss as Chicago defeated New York.

Longley's two free throws gave Chicago its first lead since early in the third quarter and completed the Bulls' comeback from a 10-point fourth-quarter deficit.

New York still had a chance to win, but Jordan made Chris Childs alter his shot on a drive to the basket, then got a hand on the ball as Charles Oakley was ready to shoot from underneath with less than a second left.

Scottie Pippen scored 33 points for the Bulls, who improved to 68-10 with their fifth straight victory and retained a chance to match last year's NBA-record 72 victories. Chicago has already clinched homecourt advantage throughout the postseason.

Patrick Ewing had 20 points and Larry Johnson 19 for New York, which lost its third straight home game. Nets 93, Bucks 88.

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Jimmy Jackson had 24 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists for his first career triple-double as the New Jersey Nets defeated the Milwaukee Bucks.

Kendall Gill scored 10 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter, including a clinching 3-pointer with 12.5 seconds to go, as the Nets ended a season-high five-game losing streak.

New Jersey made just two field goals in the final 4:53 and almost blew a nine-point lead, but the Bucks couldn't take advantage and lost their fourth straight and 20th in 24 games.

Vin Baker had 24 points and 15 rebounds to lead Milwaukee but he only had three points and three rebounds in the final quarter.

Magic 105, Raptors 69. In Toronto, Dennis Scott scored 20 points and Orlando held Toronto to



New York Knicks' center Patrick Ewing reaches out and fouls Chicago Bulls' guard Michael Jordan (R) as he drives to the basket in the last two minutes of their NBA game at New York's Madison Square Garden. Key Knick fouls on Jordan and his clutch foul shot allowed the Bulls to overcome a Knick lead and win 105-103 (Reuters photo)

its lowest point total ever.

The Magic tightened their grip on the seventh playoff spot in the Eastern Conference, taking a 3 1/2-game lead over Washington and Cleveland. If they finish seventh, they will avoid a first-round meeting with the defending champion Chicago Bulls.

Gerald Wilkins added 19 points for the Magic, who held Toronto to 39.4 per cent shooting from the field. Toronto's 69 points broke the previous team low of 70 against Minnesota on Nov. 30. Sharone Wright led the Raptors with 17 points.

### NBA RESULTS

Orlando	105	Toronto	69
Miami	93	Detroit	83
New Jersey	93	Milwaukee	88
Chicago	105	New York	103
Seattle	90	Dallas	82
Houston	102	Vancouver	94
Portland	98	San Antonio	81
Golden State	109	Denver	107 (OT)
Minnesota	108	LA Clippers	96
Phoenix	101	Sacramento	99

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AAQ4 CAKQ 05432 AA102  
Partner opens the bidding with one spade. What do you respond?  
Q. 2 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:  
AAS TQ88 0K76 AA8K1073  
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one spade. What action do you take?  
Q. 3 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:  
AAJ6 QAS 0J985 AA8J8  
The bidding has proceeded:  
EAST SOUTH WEST NORTH  
1C DBA 2C  
What action do you take?  
Q. 4 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:  
AAQ642 CAQ1073 085 AS  
The bidding has proceeded:  
WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH  
Pass 1C DBA 7  
What action do you take?  
Q. 5 - East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:  
AA102 T1074 0J976 AAQ9  
The bidding has proceeded:  
WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH  
1C DBA Pass 7  
What action do you take?  
Q. 6 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:  
AA4 J1098732 0Void AKJ108  
The bidding has proceeded:  
WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH  
1C 1NT Pass  
What do you bid now?





A Palestinian from the Islamic Resistance Movement 'Hamas', lead by Israeli police and army personnel points to the burial place of missing Israeli soldier Sharon Edri in the West Bank village of Surif on Thursday (AFP photo)

## Israel prepares to demolish 3 Palestinian homes

SURIF (AFP) — The Israeli army sealed the homes of three Palestinians Friday in this West Bank village prior to their demolition after the three were arrested for involvement in a string of anti-Israeli attacks.

Meanwhile, Israeli forces found in Surif other parts of an Israeli soldier whose body was uncovered in the village on Thursday, the Israeli Tim news service reported.

The soldier, Sharon Edri, was picked up seven months ago by members of the cell of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) while hitchhiking home from an army base outside Tel Aviv. He was shot minutes after he entered the car.

Five members of the unit that carried out the attack and several others against Israelis were arrested this week by Israeli and Palestinian security forces.

The sixth member of the cell carried out a suicide bombing last month in Tel Aviv that killed three Israelis. Israeli security officials said the cell was responsible for a total of 11 Israeli deaths.

Four of the cell members were from Surif, which was placed under curfew after the Tel Aviv bombing and then again on Thursday with the discovery of the body.

Israeli troops continued on Friday to swarm Surif located between the West Bank cities of Bethlehem and Hebron.

The homes sealed belonged to Ibrahim Ghanimat, 35 and Abdul Rahman Ghanimat, 24 — both relatives of the Tel Aviv suicide bomber — and Jamal Al Hur, 28.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was expected to return early Sunday to Israel from Europe in order to attend Edri's funeral.

## U.S. group calls on Malta forum to ensure respect for human rights in region

By Ghafnia Alal  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — An American human rights group has called on the foreign ministers of the 12 Mediterranean and the 15 European countries to enhance their commitment to human rights standards.

In a letter addressed to the Malta conference to be held on April 15-16, the Human Rights Watch said "The human rights situation in many parts of the region remains grave, with consequences ranging from the disruption of the Oslo process in the Israeli-Palestinian arena to the enormous loss of life in Algeria, where attacks by armed opposition groups and by the authorities have killed and wounded hundreds of civilians in the past year. In many European countries a mood of hostility toward immigrants, sometimes erupting in violence, continues to grow."

The Human Rights Watch urged that the final communiqué of the ministerial conference in Malta address the following concerns: A clear and unambiguous condemnation of all attacks, by governments or by armed opposition forces, on human rights and humanitarian workers; a strong endorsement of the Canadian-sponsored initiative to ban anti-personnel land mines world-wide; a public commitment to address the problems faced by migrant workers and their families, including discrimination and xenophobic violence; an unequivocal reaffirmation of the right of citizens of the participating countries to monitor and report on the human rights practices of their own governments and of other governments; a public and unconditional commitment by participating states to end the practice of torture in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

By incorporating these elements, the group said, the Malta conference would serve as a model for similar multilateral and regional projects as well as help reinforce a growing international consensus around these issues.

The letter cited killings of United Nations human rights workers in Rwanda and staff of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Chechnya. It also mentioned kidnapping of persons working with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees in Tajikistan as well as the murderous attacks against human rights monitors, lawyers and activists in India, Colombia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Brazil, Mexico and the Dominican Republic.

"The Malta declaration can provide a strong signal that governments throughout the Euro-Mediterranean region condemn without reservation these attempts to terrorise and intimidate human rights and humanitarian workers," the Human Rights Watch said in the letter.

The group also called on the Malta conference to implement national measures prohibiting the use, production, trade and stockpiling of anti-personnel mines.

"In the view of Human Rights Watch, any use of anti-personnel land mines is in violation of international humanitarian law as they are inherently indiscriminate and disproportionately harm civilians," the group said.

Regarding the protection of migrant workers and families, the human rights group expressed hope that the pledges in the Barcelona Declaration will be respected.

"We urge you at Malta conference, to affirm that adverse discrimination and violence against migrant workers and their families will not be tolerated," it said.

The human rights group also called on the Malta conference to affirm the right of citizens to seek and disseminate information about their rights and to demand remedies when those rights are violated.

The Euro-Mediterranean governments should remove all impediments to the ability of both domestic and international non-governmental organisations, in particular human rights organisations, to operate and have their representatives move freely in the Euro-Mediterranean countries, the group added.

## Jordan accepts Eran as new Israeli envoy

By Tareq Ayyoub  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The government has approved the nomination of Israel's new ambassador, Oded Eran, Israeli embassy spokesman Shalom Tourgeman said Thursday.

Mr. Eran replaces Shimon Shamir, who left the Kingdom in March of this year after two years in office.

Mr. Tourgeman said that the new ambassador was due in Amman in a few weeks, but no date has been fixed for his arrival. The embassy's highest official during the transitional period is Charge d'Affaires Yacov Rosen.

Mr. Eran's nomination came amid tensions in relations between the two countries due to Israel's arbitrary measures in Arab East Jerusalem, especially after it started building of a settlement there that has sparked confrontations between Palestinians and Israeli soldiers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Earlier this month, the Arab League called upon its 22 members to halt all normalisation of relations with the Jewish state for its refusal to stop confiscation of Palestinian lands and the building of the settlement in Arab East Jerusalem and decided to revive the Arab boycott of Israel.

Jordanian opposition parties have urged the government to recall the Jordanian ambassador from Tel Aviv and to ask the Israeli ambassador to leave the Kingdom.

Asked whether the new ambassador would be able to ease the tension between the two countries and absorb Jordanian popular anger, Mr. Tourgeman said that Mr. Eran "is a government official and he will implement his government's policies." He did not elaborate.

Mr. Eran, a 56-year-old former Israeli army officer, holds a Ph.D. from the London School of Economics. He is also a graduate from the Hebrew University in Oriental and political science.

The new ambassador was deputy director-general of economic affairs at the Israeli foreign ministry. He served in Israel's embassy in Washington and was a member of Israel's delegation to the United Nations.

## Pope voices concern over W. Bank clashes

VATICAN CITY (R) — Pope John Paul voiced grave concern on Thursday at violence between Israelis and Palestinians and called on all sides to show goodwill to break what he called a "vicious circle" threatening the peace process.

The leader of the world's Roman Catholics made his remarks in a speech accepting the credentials of Israel's new ambassador to the Vatican, Aharon Lopez.

He said the Vatican welcomed progress towards peace since Israel struck an historic self-rule accord with Palestinians but added that "difficulties and crises" still threatened "to shatter the fragile optimism that has been growing."

"In this regard, I renew the expression of grave concern with which the Holy See and the entire international community has noted the recent heightening of tensions in an already delicate and volatile situation," the Pope said.

He said a "seemingly endless spiral of action, reaction and counter-reaction" was "a vicious circle from which there can be no escape unless all parties act with genuine goodwill and solidarity."

Israel's groundbreaking on a Jewish settlement in Arab East Jerusalem on March 18 has sparked almost daily Palestinian protests and clashes with Israeli security forces.

Thursday's ceremony was only the second time a pontiff has welcomed an Israeli ambassador to the Vatican. Full ties were sealed only in 1994 after centuries of distrust between Jews and Christians.

Mr. Lopez told the 76-year-old pontiff that Middle East peace had to be irreversible but if true peace were to become a reality "no side must feel the loser."

## Indian government routed in parliament

### Horse-trading negotiations fail to break fall of Deve Gowda cabinet

NEW DELHI (Agencies) — Indian Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda's coalition government fell here Friday after being routed in a vote of confidence, raising the prospect of the second general elections within a year.

The 10-month-old United Front government was ousted by 292 votes to 158 after a marathon day-long debate, capping a fortnight of political deadlock.

Mr. Deve Gowda, who had rejected earlier appeals from his own colleagues to resign to try to save the coalition, gave a defiant final speech before leaving the lower house to present his resignation to Indian President Shankar Dayal Sharma.

Mr. Sharma was expected to call another party to try to form a new coalition or call for general elections.

Mr. Deve Gowda, in a two-hour 20 minute address, lashed out at the front's former ally, the Congress (I) Party, whose withdrawal of parliamentary support led to the coalition's downfall.

He accused them of "dirty politics," adding: "I am never afraid of anybody who wants to play bullying."

"I do not know manipulative politics. I am not a person to stab anyone in the back."

"I have been branded an ineffective prime minister by the Congress. But the final judgement is before the nation."

"If destiny is there for me to rise again from the dust, I will come back with the same strength."

The United Front government's fate was not sealed until the very last minute Friday, as the coalition and the Congress Party held secret talks to try and find a compromise while debate continued in the lower house.

The Congress, which had backed the front since June 1996 to keep the Hindu nationalists out of power, withdrew its support on March 30 and tried to persuade some of the front's dozen parties to back its own coalition.

When that appeal failed, the Congress, which accused the government of misrule, said it would only renew its backing if Mr. Deve Gowda was sacked.

The front, which had rejected that demand throughout the 13-day crisis before Friday's U-turn, was considering possible alternatives to Mr. Deve Gowda as leader right up to the confidence vote.

In the end, however, the brinkmanship by both sides ran out of time.

New elections, which are expected to play into the hands of the Hindu nationalists after a series of strong showings in regional polls, now seem likely.

None of the three power blocs in the lower house, the United Front (around 180 seats), the Congress (139 seats) and the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), 162 seats, can form a government on their own in the 545-seat Lok Sabha.

Expectations that the centre-left coalition and

Congress would be able to back a joint candidate to replace Mr. Deve Gowda pushed up share prices on Friday. The Bombay bourse's key index ended up nearly one per cent at 3,633.73 points.

News that lawmakers would hold a special session on April 21-23 to take up the investor-friendly budget, announced in February but still before parliament, also spurred the rally.

In his speech concluding 12-1/2 hours of debate on the confidence motion, Mr. Deve Gowda referred frequently to Congress leader Sitaram Kesri, saying: "I have been branded as inefficient by the congress president. The final judgement... is before the nation of 950 million people. The inefficient prime minister will go before the nation."

He said it was no use trying to "patch up" relations with Congress as this would serve no purpose. "We don't want elections but we see no alternative road," he said.

The prime minister's speech appeared to dampen prospects that the United Front and Congress would be able to choose a new Indian leader and avert mid-term elections.

"We are going to the people," Jammu and Kashmir State Chief Minister and United Front member Farooq Abdullah said. "I don't see any other alternative but elections."

## U.S. sees failure of European approach to Tehran; Moscow expects growing Iran relations

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The U.S. government is calling on Germany and other European governments to cut their economic ties to Iran in light of a German court ruling that the "highest state levels" in Tehran ordered the assassination of an Iranian opposition figure.

Germany responded to the decision by recalling its ambassador and ordering four Iranian diplomats to leave Germany.

The judges convicted two men of murder and two others of complicity in the 1992 killing of Iranian-Kurdish leader Sadeq Sarafkandi and three colleagues. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns called the action courageous.

The Clinton administration has been trying to isolate Iran politically and economically on grounds it sponsored such acts of terrorism. Tehran has angrily denied this.

In contrast, Germany and other European Union countries have pursued a policy of a "critical dialogue" with Tehran over the past 4 1/2 years, raising issues of terrorism and human rights while maintaining diplomatic and trading ties with the oil-rich nation.

Mr. Burns said the German court decision confirmed a long-held U.S. view that terrorism is directed from Tehran. He said German authorities should draw "their own conclusions," and that the United States would take up the verdict with other European governments, as well.

"The 'critical dialogue' has not succeeded in moderating Iran's behaviour," Mr. Burns said. "There is no evidence that the 'critical dialogue' has made a difference."

"We would be very pleased if the European governments moved to choke off trade with Iran," he said.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin on Friday predicted relations between Russia and Iran would grow stronger, even as the EU shunned Tehran for allegedly ordering the murder of Iranian dissidents on European soil, Interfax said.

Mr. Yeltsin made his remarks in a meeting with the speaker of the Iranian parliament, Ali Akbar Nateq Nuri, the agency said.

Mr. Yeltsin said the current level of contact between Iran and Russia "suggests that these relations will develop and strengthen."

"We have positive cooperation with Iran which is tending to grow," Mr. Yeltsin told journalists.

Thursday's court ruling implicated senior leaders, including President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in the murder of the four Iranian Kurd opponents.

During a closed-door meeting, Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Nateq Nuri — whose visit to Russia began Thursday and continues until Monday — were expected to discuss economic cooperation between their two countries, chiefly on energy resources, Interfax reported.

Mr. Nateq Nuri was also expected to meet Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov as well as Egor Stroyev, the speaker of the upper house.

Russia has been seeking to diversify its foreign policy partners at a time when Western Europe is ignoring Moscow's protests and going ahead with plans to expand the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) alliance into Eastern Europe.

Mr. Yeltsin's public calls for closer ties with Iran put him decidedly out of step with Western countries

including the United States. Mr. Nateq Nuri's visit also illustrates the changing priorities in Russian foreign policy.

Mr. Primakov, a Middle East specialist appointed last year, has made better relations with this region and the rest of Asia a policy priority.

Moscow announced on Thursday it would host Chinese President Jiang Zemin later this month for a visit designed to build the foundations for closer ties after decades of mutual distrust following border clashes in the 1960s.

Indian Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda visited Moscow last month.

Russia also sees considerable commercial and diplomatic opportunity in Iran, and is building a nuclear power plant there despite strong U.S. objections.

Mr. Nateq Nuri, addressing the Russian parliament in Farsi, bailed improving relations between Moscow and Tehran and said their geographical closeness gave them common interests.

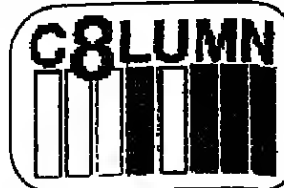
"We are sure that Iranian-Russian relations are based on a firm foundation, long-term perspective and unchanging interests," he said, in remarks released in Russian translation.

He did not refer to the German court ruling.

Mr. Nateq Nuri also attacked Western countries in his remarks to parliament, which is dominated by communists and their conservative allies.

"Some expansionist Western countries, under the pretext of fundamental changes in Russia, are trying to impose on the world a certain type of guardianship," Mr. Nateq Nuri said.

"And we have common official opinion of this issue, which is the world community does not need any kind of guardianship."



### Hillary sees Whitewater as an obsession

WASHINGTON (AFP) — U.S. first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, in a television interview Thursday, compared the never-ending Whitewater saga to "some people's obsession with UFOs (unidentified flying objects) and the Hale-Bopp comet." "Did she say that? That's pretty good," President Clinton later told reporters asking for comments on his wife's remarks. Did he agree with her, the reporters pressed on. "If I didn't, I wouldn't disagree with her in public," the president shot back.

### 'Make movies, baby' Schwarzenegger

NEW YORK (AFP) — Musclem action star Arnold Schwarzenegger accepted the Simon Wiesenthal Centre's national leadership award for his generosity to the group's Los Angeles Museum of Tolerance during the past 12 years. "Every time he makes a movie, we receive unsolicited a significant gift from Arnold and Maria," said the centre's founder Rabbi Marvin Hier during the ceremony at New York's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. Hier offered a blessing in Hebrew to Schwarzenegger, who was accompanied by his wife, Maria Shriver. The rabbi said the blessing translated roughly into: "make movies, baby."

### Guccione asked to pay damages

NEW YORK (AFP) — Bob Guccione, Sting music magazine director and heir to the Penthouse empire, has been ordered to pay \$110,000 to a former employee in a sexual harassment lawsuit. Guccione was cleared of all charges of sexual harassment, but was found responsible of creating a hostile environment to female employees in the workplace.

### Body-part artist arrested

LONDON (AFP) — A Scotland Yard investigation into the alleged use of body parts in works of art has led to the arrest of a former employee of the Royal College of Surgeons, police said Thursday. Sources said the arrest follows the discovery of dismembered body parts of up to 30 people in sculptor Anthony Noel Kelly's London studio and at Ronden Castle, the 41-year-old artist's family seat near Ashford in south-eastern England. Kelly is reported to use the heads, torsos and feet of dead people to mould plaster casts, which he then fills with glass-fibre and gilds with silver or gold.

### No more cats in Swiss post

ZURICH (AFP) — Swiss citizens will no longer be able to pop their cats in the post after the authorities introduced new measures Thursday tightening up on animal mail. The new regulations bans the postal transportation of any animals weighing more than 15 kilograms "except beehives, which can weigh 20 kilograms," under the measures, cat shipments are banned altogether, while other pets such as parrots and rabbits, can only be sent in aerated containers and by express delivery. On average, some 85 creatures are sent by post daily, many of them destined for laboratories.